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**Cinema into the Real**  
A PhD submission by theory and practice

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## Abstract

*Cinema into the Real* is the practice of creating an affect based encounter between film and the lived world where their thresholds shift. It is an inquiry into the possibility for navigating what Gilles Deleuze calls the 'not-yet-thought' brought into existence by an irrational form of cinema comprised of crystalline *time-images*. How does the schema of normative cinema fiction and documentary stand in for the lived world, and how might the statements, maps and spaces of this cinema be made fluid to form a more radical moving image, one that is further implicated in, and may open up insightful gaps for, our experience?

There are three facets to this inquiry: first, the emergent and imaginative situation of filmmaking itself, where the very intention to make moving images produces a new frame through which to practise everyday life, a cinema of action and alteration; secondly, the invention of my *conceptual persona* as *filmmaker*, an uncommon self that I have cultivated in order to approach filmmaking as in part alien to its methods of production; thirdly, the exploration of a limit in thought (which is the state of affect, commonly experienced as panic) by way of a mental gap brought into being by aberrant moving images. Twelve films (and cinema interventions) were made, and these are thinking spaces in themselves. Between the theoretical text written, and the films produced, I have extended the flight line projected in Deleuze's two cinema books, in an attempt to *do* film as an art practice of experimental philosophy, and to navigate a space between cinema and the lived world. This minor cinema of which I speak, and which I practise, is acquired by destratification and drifting, courts affect, and can, I will argue, enable new aspects of (non-habitual) thought.

## Cinema into the Real

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This doctoral research project is dedicated to Rosalind Peters and Aerynne Eastwood.

Thank you:

Penny Florence, Geoffrey Alan Rhodes, Robert Dighton, Natalie Spagnol, Mairead McClean, Duncan Reekie, Clare Moloney, Sharon Smith, Anya Lewin, Jo Burlington, Annis Joslin, Lucy Reynolds, Ben Callaway, Jayne Parker, Monica Biagioli, Helen Peters, Daniel Frampton, Sarah Cooper, Sally Irvine, Ian Lewis, Roy Roussel and the staff and students of The Dept of Media Study (SUNY Buffalo), the staff and students of the Slade School of Art (UCL), Manuel Alvarado and the Surrey Institute, Stefani Bardin, Jen Gast, Document-Centre Southwark, Prague cafe-bar London, Spot Coffee Buffalo, Cafe Bernate Toronto, and all those who participated in the film productions.

Cinema into the Real is indebted to the film philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and D.N. Rodowick.

Films produced during the research period:

*A Seminar in Film Sound* (2007)  
*Hearsay* (2006)  
*Like A House On Fire* (2006)  
*Come As You Are* (2005)  
*The Film We Didn't Make* (2005-6)  
*The Film* (2004)  
*Of Camera* (2003)  
*Different Systems of Chaos* (with Anya Lewin, 2003)  
*Chris Crossing* (2003)  
*The End* (2002)

Films produced prior to the research period but commented upon here:

*I Make Things Happen* (2001)  
*Auditorium* (1999/2002)

Performance installations made during the research period:

*Cinema into the Real*, Tests 1-5 (2001-2004)

Cinematic essays/performing texts:

*The Film is in front of us* (2005/06)  
*The Film To Come* (2007 -)

Web sites:

[www.cinemaintothereal.org](http://www.cinemaintothereal.org)  
[www.cinemaintothereal.org/interval](http://www.cinemaintothereal.org/interval)  
[www.cinemaintothereal.org/interval2](http://www.cinemaintothereal.org/interval2)  
[www.ofcamera.org.uk](http://www.ofcamera.org.uk)  
[www.omsk.org.uk](http://www.omsk.org.uk)

I once received a phone call from a woman of what sounded like Eastern European origin. She told me that she had a, 'Three year long film' she wanted to show me. This small linguistic slip started a series of thoughts about film and the lived world...





Cinema into the Real

Prologue.

Sc 1. Lines of flight into the cinema as situation

In a parable by Jorge Luis Borges there is a map that is the same scale as the territory it depicts.<sup>1</sup> Brought into relation with cinema, Borges paradoxical cartography invokes questions such as: what is the schema of normative cinema fiction and documentary, how does it stand in for the lived world, and how might the maps and spaces such a cinema creates be extended to become implicated in and even indistinguishable from our experience of the real?

*Cinema into the Real* is an inquiry into the possibility for navigating what the philosopher Gilles Deleuze calls the 'not-yet-thought' brought into existence by an irrational form of cinema comprised of *time-images* (Deleuze 1989). *Cinema into the Real* is also the practice of encountering the lived world with the very difference of directing one's self, as filmmaker, towards it. In total, twelve films/film interventions were produced during the course of the research, each working with the contingency of the film shoot and the possibilities of the edit, often utilizing accident, improvisation and irrationality in their construction. These films question the distinction between a factual and fictional image, and follow a willful line of departure from narrative and representation into reflexivity, pure duration, and moments of temporal absence. The films are awkward; they seek to occupy a place of discomfort between the binary oppositions of film and not-film, fiction and non-fiction, and an audience's engagement and disengagement. They incorporate aberrant continuity and diegetic collapse in order to open up an interval that I will argue can enable cinematic and mental states that would previously have been relegated to either narrative or abstraction.

What happens when a distinction between film and thought is compromised, and what emerges when a distinction between film and world is abolished? What follows in this



text bring together concepts from philosophy, cognitive science and behavioural psychology, and post-structural theories of identity and the nature of the moving image. I enter into a dialogue with theorists, filmmakers and films as philosophical friends. Principally, I have extended the flight line projected in, and projecting through, Deleuze's two cinema books, *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* (Deleuze 1986) and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (Deleuze 1989), towards the very limit of the capabilities of the moving image. Here, then, between the text I have written and the films I have made, is my attempt to navigate a space between cinema and the lived world.

There are three facets to this inquiry: first, the situation of filmmaking itself - the emergent and imaginative attitudes of those who are filmmaking; secondly, my conceptual persona (a term borrowed from Deleuze and Félix Guattari<sup>2</sup>), which is *filmmaker* - an uncommon self that I have cultivated in order to approach filmmaking as, in part, alien to its methods of production; thirdly, the possibility for an encounter with a limit in thought which is commonly experienced as distressing, by way of a mental gap brought into being by irrational moving images. The relationship I draw between thought and image, between cinema and the lived world, is predominantly not based on spectatorship, although there are specific areas of the text where I explore the relationship between film and viewer. Rather, what follows is a theory of an embodied moving image that collapses distinctions between film and the real. What I mean by this is how an image can become unstable within its own system and eventually stray from its screen mooring and enter the lived world; how filmmaking might be practiced in actual contexts with a more tactile and improvisatory attitude; and, how the moving image as a virtual plane can confuse the limit of our physicality, and take our thoughts to the point of exceeding habitual response.

The thesis does follow a narrative of sorts, one that progresses from cinema (Act One) to the real (Act Two). In *Act One* (scenes 2-6) the text is concerned with the distressing of the classical cinema form, what Deleuze terms the *movement image*. Scene 2 looks at the

period which Deleuze terms the 'first modern' of the cinema, unity of structure is the goal, and this is achieved through the rational linkage of images in montage, where time is subordinate to movement.<sup>3</sup> Deleuze's philosophy says that when movement-image rationality is compromised, *time-images* emerge, and he finds these time-images in the post-war period, particularly in Italian neo realist cinema, where both characters and camera drift from the anchor of logical arrangement. These itinerant images originate from filmmaking as promenade, and make the viewer a thinking wanderer. When the expression of the camera and of the editing (in picture, and in sound) becomes more crystalline and dislocated, these films have the potential to disrupt the mechanism of our cognition and make possible an encounter with a limit situation or a gap in thought. It is this gap in articulation in the film that brings about a gap in reception in the viewer, and at this point both are effectively thoughtless. And so Deleuze concentrates his attention on films that become lost, that challenge the authority and structural integrity of the system of the cinema's established vernacular; films that bring about a shock to thought either by providing thought-like temporalities or by straying from order.

Deleuze regards the cinema as the twentieth-century's greatest philosophical machine, in that, by presenting thoughts other than our own, it demonstrates how we habitually think and shows to us what kinds of thoughts we have yet to think. From within the framework of the movement-image, the filmmaker can offer models of human cognition (such as recognition and recollection) but these are not in themselves emergent engines of thought. And so Deleuze looks to filmmakers who utilize the apparatus of cinema to fashion fragmented time and identity and who quite literally think in their time-images in a way that they cannot in their own minds. Deleuze does not have any interest in developing a theory of the subject, certainly not in the Freudian or the Lacanian sense, but, like Henri Bergson, regards artists (read, filmmakers) as individuals who freely collapse aspects of their psychological make-up into the texts of their own design. Artists think with their materials, and for Deleuze the supreme material is the cinematograph. The film image and its

arrangement are thought-like but uncommon to our own thoughts, and will think differently to the thoughts of the filmmaker that were its origin. The filmmaker has certain knowledge of the film she or he creates, but this knowledge is not total, and the way in which their thoughts have emerged cannot be generalized as the same as the film or of the viewer. The viewer has new thoughts which are, by the time of the film's completion, more likely to be emergent than the filmmakers, for no filmmaker can encounter his or her own film as alien to it. All we can safely say, then, is that any and all films comprise of complex sheets of thinking.

Scenes 3 and 4 use the films *Of Camera* (2003) and *Like a House on Fire* (2006) to examine the specific temporal and architectural disruptions brought about by irrational and aberrant moving image arrangements, using Luce Irigaray's terms 'mucous' and 'fluidity' to develop a philosophy for a cinema of the gap. In *Of Camera* the character and the audience are simultaneously encountering temporal uncertainty. Fissures appear in the filmic text, providing the viewer with the opportunity for moments of novel dissociation - positive states of slippage rather than a breakdown in cognitive stability. These peculiar shifts in space and in time are disorienting and, if they were not delivered by moving images, would usually be categorized by the thinking subject as panic attacks. Here is the intensity of connection I make between panic and what Deleuze terms the *nooshock* that time-image cinema brought to the twentieth century mind.<sup>4</sup> This is what I take Brian Massumi to mean when he finds in Deleuze's concepts the possibility for hovering in an *affect* situation of not-yet-thinking.<sup>5</sup> Scene 5 looks at the relationship between cinema and disequilibrium, outlining a number of methods for how the moving image can make possible an encounter with a *pre-hodological*<sup>6</sup> or *affect*<sup>7</sup> space, with the unthinker in thought, that which is ordinarily qualified as panic, the distressing experience of losing situatedness. The disposition of affect has intellectual, social and political implications, for the affect or panic state does not- (yet) recognize categories, boundaries or teleologies, and can therefore never be discriminatory or habitual. How might we encounter this interval with confidence and without trauma? I look to film(ed) and filming events that are affect in nature, where the moving image generates confusion between what is

interior and exterior, between subjective and objective points of view. Occasionally my argument in the text and my articulation in the films purposefully incorporates repetition and slippage as devices, in order to re-situate panic positively, as affect, in the situation-as-gap encounter that is the cinematic experience. In addition to this, I include personal accounts of panic attacks (some induced by films, and others not) and other encounters with limit situations.<sup>8</sup> I do so in order to propose an extraordinary temporal territory, partly cinematographic, partly lived in actuality, partly imagined, and partly not possible. I do not suggest that any film can represent a lived encounter with such limits - this is not my aim as a filmmaker and neither is it the remit of this research. Act One ends with Scene 6, an exploration of the unknown cinematic body suggested by Deleuze and by feminist readings of phenomenology. This unknown body is the film *and* the actual, a space between the identities that are making a film, the identity that is watching the film, and the event that is like identity, the film *itself* - its body, the occurrences it evinces on the screen, and the multiplicity of voices and comprehensions it creates. Such a cinema is a *body without organs* (Artaud's term, redeployed by Deleuze) that moves beyond physical limits, let loose in the physical world from which it derives; a cinema that is without the cinematograph, and only possible in thought. The physical body remains, as does the body of the apparatus of the cinema, but these bodies become increasingly conflated, and their respective possibilities are extended into absurdity as a body without organs in the mind.

It is important to stress that the moving image as a storytelling medium is not entirely the enemy - narrative remains a bedfellow and is referred to throughout the two principle Acts as a pivot for leveraging out differences to schemas of meaning. My inquiry retains an interest in story structures in order to shore up ideas about possible and navigable departures from the narratives of cinema and the narratives of our conduct in social space. In *Of Camera*, the *I Make Things Happen* trilogy (2001-3), and *Like a House on Fire* the coherent central subject or narrator is destabilized, and the threshold of the classical film system is closely navigated. The way in which these films come close to contravening the materials and systems which

contain them is explored in relation to Janet Cardiff's experiments with the cinematic form as lived, the crystalline time-images of Alain Resnais (and Alain Robbe-Grillet), Maya Deren and Andrei Tarkovsky, and the ontology of the edit in Gary Hill's *Incidence of Catastrophe* (1987-88) and in the films of Peter Tscherkassky, amongst other contemporary film and video examples. There is not room within these pages to fully outline the classical cinematic practices these films tamper with and surpass, nor is there space to properly consider the supremacy of the film theory paradigm still dominant in spite of numerous post-structural alternatives.<sup>9</sup> The research has concentrated on surplus and excess rather than on unity and resolution; on what the fissures or cracks inherent in any film text can offer to thought and to behaviour. All of the films referred to use narrative, some more explicitly than others. Certain pieces, such as *Like a House on Fire*, depend on the narrative search engines in the minds of the audience for their completion (what Bergson calls our *sensory-motor schema*). This is all fine, and any audience member is supremely skilled in extracting meaning from disparate events and signs. The greater desire, though, is to give the audience sufficient confidence (in the filmmaker and in the film) to remain in the state of extracting, of mining, rather than to hurry towards the dead conclusion of whether the film does or does not make sense, or whether it does or does not stimulate and entertain. What I mean by this is that I am principally interested in the mental state and the emotional state where both the person filmmaking (myself) and the person film watching, is oscillating between the sensible and the irrational.

Often, for the viewer, narrative-like events are enough, and this is what is transpiring in *Of Camera* and *Like a House on Fire*. Both films give the impression that narrative coherence is just around the corner, a few shots from now, although every corner turned offers another corner. During this thwarting of expectation for story the audience either becomes irritated, or switches to a different access point to the flow of images in sequence. This, I argue, is how narrative remains a potent material for modification, because films that stray from this mooring bring about a shock to thought – a shock in which the thinker loses

stable ground and becomes receptive to other, non-linguistic signs. Without narrative-like elements, however, it is less possible to explore this state, and so the films I have produced often use the same building blocks as classical cinema: actors, scripts, suggestive scores, motifs, in fact almost all of the tropes and vernacular of the form. I use these materials fluidly, and with aberration, attempting to give myself to the film that is exterior to me, and to that which is exterior to the film. Whether or not giving ones' self to an exterior using the cinema is a realizable goal is not of consequence. The endeavour to play with language and resist territories or definitions creates unexpected ruptures, and the cinema of ruptures can offer us unique absences from habitual thought and conduct, whilst not robbing our minds of agency. Certainly, when cultivated within the possibility of my own thoughts, the cinema of rupture has such potency that the physical limitations of the medium become transgressed, so that frames collapse and the film spills; it becomes what Deleuze terms *a life*.<sup>10</sup> But this is only possible in thought. Although a filmmaker, or any person imagining a film can think this kind of a film, physically we can only make assertions towards it, and this is true even of an entirely digitally generated image. The cinema shows us its own limits as it reveals to us the possibility for exceeding the limit of our habitual thought. This is the first meaning of the term *cinema into the real*: a cinema of thought. Here then I am asking, what kinds of thoughts cinema can be?

However, as Deleuze argues in *Cinema 2*, every film builds upon the legacy of cinema, every film sits within the manifold discourses and associations of the larger term, 'Cinema,' even when it is commenting on or rejecting cinema and presented as video or film art in a white cube. As a filmmaker, can one be untimely, without family, and not determined by the past? Can the filmmaker create temporary uprisings without recuperation? In *The Nick of Time* Elizabeth Grosz asks, 'How to create without reproducing prevailing models and practices, except to take what has been unutilized, undeveloped, from the past and make it a force that breaks through the strictures and limits on the present?' (Grosz 2004: 120). The task I have set for myself is to make films anew whilst not opposing the vernacular of the

cinematic - to find a plane for identity as filmmaker so as to transform cinema's language and its operations. Such an attempt at *becoming-filmmaker*<sup>11</sup> is to be alien to one's origins as filmmaker and to the cultural history of cinema. Instead of abandoning language altogether, I have treated the cinematic as a block that enables a different kind of moving image, what I term here as *film*. To propose and maintain this distinction, *film*, within the broader trope of Cinema is difficult. Deleuze gives no ontological definition of film in his two cinema books although his philosophy is an ontology of film, in that he declares the being of film is movement and time. Here, my use of the word *film* encompasses celluloid, digital and analogue video, performed actions and installations, and the virtual of thought. That is not to say this definition accounts for the entirety of Film or of Cinema. Analysis of Classic cinema centres on Film as an *operation*; it is an operation because it adds something to pre-existing codes.<sup>12</sup> We can thus think of Classic cinema as essentially a strategy that operates from the place of the studio system and the economic order of production, distribution and exhibition. *film* is a tactical application of the moving image; it is in departure from the hegemonic mode of classical narrative cinema, documentary as Truth, Film as art, or the debates within Structural-Materialism. By my definition, *film* is neither the maintenance of an order and unity as exemplified by Hollywood, nor the expulsion of narrative as argued over by the Structural-Materialists. *film* is the *oneiric* and crystalline mental and behavioural negotiation of world and not-world, but more than this, it is the encounter of a blurring between these distinctions. *film* is a means by which the lived world and what we understand to be time can be (re)-envisioned outside of regimes of meaning and habitual forms of processing and reception.

To this end, or rather, to this middle, I have developed a *film tactic*, a film practice of the actual, what I describe as 'lived film.' The *film tactic* is ad hoc, in the moment, the series of 'nomadic operations' (Michel De Certeau 1984<sup>13</sup>). This 'way of making' is an anti-discipline of micro-operations, an art of becoming lost in a film operation between production and exhibition, between intention and chaos, between a film thought and an act of filmmaking: a

modulation, an open set of intercessors and irrational interstices. The process of the film tactic is without locality and sets out to 'rent' space (de Certeau's term) in the place of the institutions of film & video art, narrative cinema and the documentary, in order to tamper with and collapse these terms from within. The rental of space in this place of the dominant order affords the social self the possibility of living out novel and self-authored narratives of the everyday, temporarily freed from institutions of work, leisure, and culture. This effectively means to assume the guise of, or occupy the order of existing conventions, with difference and without becoming co-opted into their institutional frames. This is an attitude, when filmmaking, which is comparable to Deleuze and Guattari's *schizoanalysis*, a concept developed from Antonin Artaud which rejects the way in which identity as self is achieved through the pressures exerted by social structures. In *The Brain is the Screen*, Gregory Flaxman explains that 'Deleuze does not advocate schizophrenia or use of drugs but he does look to the schizophrenic experience as a model of thought and life that forces us to look beyond the confines of our own limited notion of reality' (Flaxman 2000: endnote 59, 108).

A film's body without organs may be immaterial, but the actuality of filmmaking articulates an embodied form of thinking. Such a model for the realization of a counter mode of thought in this context advocates assuming the guise of filmmaker in order to harness an untamed and fractured way of thinking in regard to the situation at hand. Becoming filmmaker, and entering into a "lived film," can offer transformative possibilities for social conduct and for perception, although it is problematic to make any attempt to regiment this. Such a practice refutes the *ontological error* of representation and inventively denatures rather than represents our customary experience of the lived world. The second half of the text, Act Two (scenes 7-10), outlines the film tactic as a response to the resemblance complex at the heart of the documentary. These chapters focus on the situation of filmmaking, and on the *conceptual persona* I have developed, which is *filmmaker*. Scene 7 does for the documentary what Scene 2 does for the fiction film, establishing the various normative forms before giving attention to factual films which are crystalline in construction, thick in



description and employ subjective devices. Two specific films were produced using the *film* tactic: *The Film* (2004) and *The Film We Didn't Make* (2006). Scenes 8 and 9 describe the concept and process for the production of *The Film*, which was is to make use of interiority, fabulation and excess in the factual form. *The Film* resembles a documentary, although it does not perform or inform like one, and the *par hasard* method it utilises is compared with *Gallivant* (Andrew Kötting 1996), *The Gleaners and I* (Agnes Varda 2000) and the film poems of Margaret Tait. The follow-up to *The Film*, *The Film We Didn't Make*, resembles a fiction, although it does not deliver as one (an additional and purposefully incomplete chapter on this film is included here as an appendix to the main text). Two additional films, *Different Systems of Chaos* (2003) and *Come As You Are* (2005) transform or reinvent the order of the situation they direct themselves towards. In the production of these four films I have *enacted* filmmaking, often foolishly, willfully attempting to forget the proper of a classical filmmaking process in order to *become* this other filmmaker. Here, the rubric that is cinema is brought to bear on the real, so that the act (actuality) of making a film introduces new situations, and ways of thinking about those situations to the participants and the small film production team. This tactic is a frame, a frame that is neither the film/video material itself nor the final edited teleological outcome, nor a filter attached to the camera or projector, but rather an ongoing 'virtual', placed over the real, so that the real is lived differently. We can call this frame *filmmaking*, a license to act-out, to open life onto the new.

For this filmmaking tactic I have adopted the Situationist International (SI) tactic of the *dérive* (to drift, without schema or plan). There is a strong and enduring spirit of resistance that flows through the drift tactics of the SI and the urban and suburban psycho-geographers of the everyday about whom Guy Debord, Michel de Certeau and Hakim Bey write. I have placed emphasis on the complex ways in which cinema interacts with life and on the emergent mental and social attitudes of those in the act of filming - their minds and bodies wandering - rather than on the film object itself.<sup>14</sup> It is a desire, the desire to be propelled into unforeseen situations. Such a tactic courts failure but failure provides the thrust. This way of

operating is a form of thinking where the activity of wandering generates the space for discovery. The film tactic responds to what emerges from the *outside* of the planned film. I have been drifting, cinematically 'making do,' producing films as a means to make sense of the films being produced. Methodologically, the tactic is a response to Deleuze's idea of a minor cinema, one that is detached in process from the movement-image of normative fiction and documentary film and does not seek to make representations of and for an *other*. This cinema is the utterance of a minor voice that necessarily uses and misuses a dominant language, although, I will argue, the *time-image* films Deleuze gives readings of do not fully actualize this concept of a minor cinema, which remains, as a potentiality.

The chief weapon of a minor cinema is falsity and fabulation: the complex and often forged interrelationship between documentary, fiction and the social world. Scene 10, 'Close-Up, the film practice of intervening in reality,' places the film tactic in a dialogue with what I describe as contingent films that fluctuate between fact and fiction, including *Here to Where* (Paul Luchford/Glenn Berczeller 2001), *Double Blind* (Sophie Calle & Greg Shepherd 1992), and, principally, *Close-Up* (Abbas Kiarostami 1990) which is subject to a close reading, particularly for the way it makes transparent the novel frame for alterity that a film in production provides, for both the subject of the film and the production team. These are deterritorialized film encounters with the actual, in which the nature of the encounter and the transformation of the subject determines on-screen content; where the very reality of making a film alters the life-trajectory of those participating. Films of this nature are double palimpsests that involve the constant rewriting of the actual they direct themselves at, and in turn, the re-writing of their own process and schema by the actual they have written over. The subset of their making enables a specific form of invention, where the social self can utilize cinema as fabula to perform other narratives. In *The Film* and *The Film We Didn't Make* a group of people, as filmmakers, direct themselves towards the actual so as to alter its emergent and contingent properties. The doing has greater prominence than the result, and the very intention to make moving images produces a new frame through which to practice

everyday life. This is the second meaning of the term *cinema into the real*: a cinema of action and alteration. Act Two posits filmmaking as not only a fantastical space for our entertainment and cognitive expansion, but also a social manner in and of itself - a form of localized speech act.

Deleuze writes that the cinema is 'a new practice of images and signs, whose theory philosophy must produce a conceptual practice. For no technical determination, whether applied (psychoanalysis, linguistics) or reflexive, is sufficient to constitute the concepts of cinema itself' (Deleuze 1989: 280). Deleuze engages critically with a range of film theories, but ultimately his objective is the greater agency for thought. Borrowing from Bergson and from Peirce, Deleuze identifies that the moving image has produced three signs: the *lectosign*, which is linked to description, the *chronosign*, which is linked to narration, and the *noosign*, which is linked to thought. But for Deleuze the image of thought is not a method for the use of thought, nor a procedure for communicating knowledge. The objective of generating a new film theory is redundant to thought. We must instead turn our attention to how film illuminates our comprehension of the relationship between image and thought, and image and body. As Tamsin Lorraine writes, Deleuze's project is 'changing the image of thought from that of a model of recognition to one promised on a logics of difference and multiplicity' (Lorraine 1999: 137). And so Deleuze produces his own exhaustive, and often contradictory taxonomy of cinema signs and practices to point out how limiting the present taxonomy is - for with a new taxonomy, comes a certain liberation of form.<sup>15</sup> But Deleuze's film philosophy is far from a mission statement for radical filmmakers, and, like Deleuze's two cinema books, this document is not an instruction for use. It does not constitute an expertise, or knowledge offered as concluded, as totality. My practice is complimentary to Deleuze's theory, but I would suggest that what is missing from Deleuze's theory is practice; although in numerous ways transformative, it does not give attention to the situation of filmmaking and in this sense remains conspicuously in line with the film theory paradigm it resists. Although an innovative and contentious departure from psychoanalytical and semiotic film theory, Deleuze's film

philosophy still concentrates on the film object itself and the nature of its reception. It is this gap in his thought that I have sought to principally occupy, giving privilege to the very eventfulness of filmmaking.

What it is, is figuring out what it is.

(T.R.Uthco Collective Member, *The Eternal Frame*, 1975<sup>16</sup>)

To isolate and execute a particular research methodology for *Cinema into the Real* has proven difficult. Deleuze and Guattari stress experiential and sequential, or process-based knowledge, over teleological or empirical knowledge. In many ways, Deleuze himself is anti-hermeneutic; he gives the reader only indeterminate directions, vectors, if you will, or lines of flight. The dominant hermeneutics for the twentieth century was psychoanalysis, and this is one particular paradigm that Deleuze, with Guattari, vehemently challenges. We are desiring machines, and before we can ask 'What does it mean?' we must first ask 'How does it mean?' Not what we desire, then, but how we desire - the act itself, rather than the goal or intention. There is no Deleuzian hermeneutics because for Deleuze all frames are provisional and vibrating and meaning is secondary to momentum. Throughout the body of his philosophy, Deleuze's transcendental empiricism exceeds the so-called hermeneutic circle in that it declares that there is no Whole that can be understood, no Whole that can be reached through the examination of contingent constituent parts.

Deleuze shares with his forebears Bergson and Nietzsche disinclination towards empirical details such as catalogues and historical chronologies. In *The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics* (1923) and *Creative Evolution* (1907), Bergson suggests that the schism between doing and knowing is the result of the emergence of intelligence within the human, which is in essence the impulse to freeze, to spatialize, and to control. For Bergson, intuition is the encounter with objects and environments that are not yet spatialized. Nietzsche writes that, 'Physiologically [...] science rests on the same foundation as the ascetic ideal: a

certain impoverishment of life is a presupposition of both of them - the affects grown cool, the tempo of life slowed down, dialectics in place of instinct, seriousness imprinted on faces and gestures' (Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, 3: 25). In Nietzsche, doing and knowing are two opposing powers. As Elisabeth Grosz elaborates in *The Nick of Time*, one expands the sphere of possible actions; the other reduces it, by regulating activity in order to make it understandable. For Deleuze, as it is for Nietzsche, thinking must be an activity, a creativity. Theory must be an application of force as emergence, not a science of the appraisal of data brought back from the field (what Grosz describes as 'the scientific robbery of activity from life' [Grosz 2004: 110<sup>17</sup>]), but ideation *in* the field itself.

The philosopher Gilbert Ryle makes the phenomenological distinction between 'knowing-how' and 'knowing-that.' Deleuze's process of transcendental empiricism involves detaching one's self from orderly knowledge in order to retrieve details from the space of knowing how, what he terms *affect*. In *Collected Papers* (1973) Ryle offers the term 'thick description,' for the more complex ways in which a thinking subject acquires and makes sense of evidential knowledge. In terms of an art practice of moving images this thick description would be to work directly with affect.<sup>18</sup> In Brian Massumi's reading of Deleuze, affect bears close similarity to Barthes' *jouissance* and Sontag's *erotics*, an embodied sense of the inexplicable that is rich in potential and precedes meaning and the psychological (Massumi 2002). This is to be in the Kantian unfamiliar, entrusted to the senses without intellectual filters and without the secure place of institutional expertise and process. What might we speculate is missed out by scientific methodologies of research, by intellectual schemas of narrative cinema production, and by what Bill Nichols calls the 'discourses of sobriety' used by the documentary film? (Nichols 1991). Primarily, what is lacking is the embodied form and utterances of the film (even if this utterance has as its intention a place within a narrative). Although the image that the filmmaker renders has the appearance of the lived world, this image is arguably no more like the lived world than any other art form, particularly in terms of its inherent dislocation of time and space. The filmmaker is faced with

whether to condition the moving image into percepts (expressions as statements or suggestions, the combinatory value of its likeness), and thereby restrict the special attributes of the cinema, or to embrace its complexity, its wild meaning *and* sheer difference. By examining various models for the moving image as indexical and factual I give criticism to the limitations of representation and look towards a minor documentary cinema of affect and thick description.

Deleuze's desires for the philosopher to *make* philosophy, by creating concepts in the way that an artist or filmmaker makes material modifications to the lived world, what Deleuze calls 'blocks of space-time' or affects.<sup>19</sup> Concepts are in the field of philosophy, percepts are in the territory of art, and affects are without field or territory, they are neither meaningful nor representational. Philosophy creates concepts that transform chaos into uniformity. It loses out against art in this respect, and so Deleuze sets out to make of philosophy an art practice.

... philosophical theory is itself a practice, just as much as its object. It is no more abstract than its object, and it must be judged in the light of the other practices with which it interferes. A theory of cinema is not about cinema, but about the concepts that cinema gives rise to and which are themselves related to other concepts corresponding to other practices... It is at the level of interference of many practices that things happen, beings, images, concepts, all the kinds of events... So that there is always a time, midday-midnight, when we must no longer ask ourselves, 'What is cinema?' but 'What is philosophy?'

(Deleuze 189: 280)

The cinema is Deleuze's philosophical companion, one of his means to think as other than Deleuze *who is thinking*: a philosopher who has died and returned to the manner of the world and to the art of thoughts about it. This is a philosopher of difference and complexity, for whom resonance rather than explication is the basis of philosophical engagement. Artists and filmmakers are not necessarily philosophers, although they do think with images and objects and with sounds. Here, the text and the films attempt to *do* film as an art practice of philosophy. And so a *Cinema into the Real* involves following a heuristic technique of placing ideas into the movement of making, and arriving at announcements (whether

meaningful or not) by a process of trial and error rather than through a set of rules or by way of dialectical, Hegelian deduction. This heuristic approach recognizes doing as an embodied form of thinking. It does not constitute a rigorous methodology and is opposed to scientific deductive methods. We go wrong. The film is ahead of those who are making it and then either lost or interwoven with the contingency of its own making.

The filmmaker who attempts to work outside of schema brings together, in crystalline form, elements of the film in progress with unregulated powers of falsity, notes and sketches.<sup>20</sup> This text follows intensities and networks of idea. At times there are irrational thought-cuts and voice breaks in the body of the text and a multitude of voices speak between and over each other: the academic argument; quotes from theorists and filmmakers; observations from the time of shooting; unannounced and freely indirect text lapses that switch between subjective and objective points of view. Throughout the document the font switches from Times New Roman to Courier New to point to the interplay between academic voice and the text as personal voice or art expression (courier is also the standard font for film scripts). In places I adopt a model of writing that is based on accumulated knowledge; at other times the intensities gain impetus and the ideas emerge, from the place of making, where they are not-yet theorized or concluded. This is what I understand by the term *rhizome* coined by Deleuze and Guattari, perhaps their most radical proposition: the between state of affect, the movement of thought before the thinker has contained it, that which rises from inspiration and has not yet slumped into declaration or completion.

It is for this reason that I have included within the text notebook entries, commentaries from observers, and why I have treated the films as thoughts in themselves, as continuations of, and companions to, the written argument. It is in this way that a film can become a venue for debate as well as a friend that can help us think thought. The space of writing (writing a film; writing this text) is not so readily open to becoming as filmmaking. There are ways of thinking in film and there are ways of thinking in writing, and although

they are not readily compatible, these differing spaces are not impossible. And so I approach here the 'telling' of the films I have produced in crystalline form, rather than observing teleological events or an historical unfolding. This is how they were made, by creating tears in the fabric of the documentary and interruptions in the ordering of fictional exposition. Instead of describing the content of the films, I draw attention to the various procedural, spatial and temporal attributes to each. As the text progresses it begins to drift in itself, involving note-form and speculative ideas in the self-consciously unfinished chapter on *The Film We Didn't Make* (Scene 12) and a thought for the cinema played out into incendiary absurdity in Scene 13, provocatively titled *The Film To Come*.

This research looks towards a nature of film (both actual, possible and not-yet possible) that enables new thought. Every time we make something, or react intuitively to an encounter, we experience a new thought, and yet the producers of cinema and television production work to deny this agency. The process of filmmaking (unlike painting, or playing a musical instrument) is so hyper-schematized and procedural that the filmmaker rarely gets to be in the practice of making films.<sup>21</sup> The tactic I have developed for the realization of moving images de-emphasizes the primacy of a completed film object and instead thinks *in* cinema and lives the everyday of a film in the making as it unfolds. This is to place film in front of one's self as a destination, and to generate a text that is not yet the film but is, rather, the life that is the film *as it is being made*. Such a tactic gives privilege to the bodies of the cast and crew (who are in the pre-filmic space), the film and video apparatus, the body of the film during its assemblage (including its cinematic detritus), and the bodies of the viewer and the screen. By adopting a tactic of drifting, away from schema or plan, and by renting space in the place of the other (the place of the institutions of art, cinema and of the documentary), I have been able to occupy a film form of *making do*. What follows is a drift, an absence even, through the between that is filmmaking, offering another film subject matter: the actuality of experiencing mediation and of occupying the interval between the actual and the invented.



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<sup>1</sup> Borges writes that 'the College of Cartographers evolved a Map of the Empire that was of the same Scale as the Empire and that coincided with it point for point' (Jorges Luis Borges, *Of Exactitude in Science*: 131, in *A Universal History of Infamy*, London: Penguin, 1984). Borges advocated stealing, re-appropriating and misappropriating ideas in literature and may have appropriated this idea from Bellman's blank map of the sea in Lewis Carroll's *The Hunting of the Snark*.

<sup>2</sup> In *What is Philosophy?* (1991) Deleuze and Guattari stated that philosophy needs *conceptual personae* who are philosophical friends to the thinker. The philosopher is in fact the concept's friend; she or he is the conduit for, and the potentiality of, the concept.

<sup>3</sup> In the two cinema books, Deleuze identifies two modern periods in the cinema, the first, which he identifies as the movement-image, roughly spans the first thirty years of the medium. The second modern Deleuze identifies as the time-image, and this occurs in the ten or so years following the trauma of the Second World War.

<sup>4</sup> *Nooshock* is an image of thought which produces a shock to thought (my definition).

<sup>5</sup> According to Massumi, who draws upon the philosophical works of Deleuze, affects exert a bodily shock and hold the key to 'rethinking postmodern power after ideology' (Massumi 2002: 42). In our image-saturated world, the power of images produces the forces that *potentialize*, transfer and change, and in which the affect is able to induce the 'new,' wherever such potential might be revealed. One arena where this 'new' might be perceivable is in experimental films, where our recognition becomes strained to its edges, to the limits of our perception. The will becomes a zone of vector forces that invent the landscapes of thought-events and then, in an opposing move, deterritorialize and break open these thought-events in artistic explosion.

<sup>6</sup> The term 'hodological space' is derived from the Greek word 'hodos', meaning path or way. In contrast to the mathematical concept of space as presented on maps, plans, etc. 'hodological space' is based on the factual topological, physical, social, and psychological conditions a person is faced with on the way from point A to point B, whether in an open landscape or within urban or architectural conditions. Deleuze speaks of a *pre-hodological* space, which he associates with the young child, where spatial and temporal properties are not yet fixed or defined.

<sup>7</sup> In *Ethics* (Works of Spinoza V.II [1955]) Spinoza defines affect as 'the modifications of the body whereby the active power of the said body is increased or diminished, aided or constrained, and also the ideas of such modification' (Spinoza [1955]: 130). In *Matter and Memory* (Bergson 1911: 60) Henri Bergson develops Spinoza's link between cognition and affect. Deleuze (1991) uses the term *affect* to describe the state in which the thinking subject has lost any distinction between exteriority and interiority, between before and after. This state of affect is ordinarily brought about by a shock.

<sup>8</sup> See the text *Caught up in Loops* in the appendices.

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<sup>9</sup> By the film theory paradigm I mean the use of psychoanalytic, linguistic, semiotic and Marxist theories as tools to analyze and/or deconstruct the film as text. Film theory began as psychoanalytical but progressed to phenomenological readings before shifting towards textual, semiotic and economic analysis. In the past decade there has been a return to embodied attitudes. Raymond Bellour argues that the cinema is in fact an unattainable text, and that the goal of film theory to find methods for interpreting the cinema-as-text, can therefore never be completed (Bellour. [1975] 2000). Certainly Deleuze wants nothing to do with structural semiotics, or with analysis for that matter, and makes no distinction between avant-garde film (and video), documentary or fiction features, if each practice retains the use of montage as the means of linking indirect images of time. He therefore replaces a platonic version of history with a genealogical approach (after Foucault), using parody and powers of the false to proliferate a theory of film and film history that never has its goal the reduction of cinema to constituent parts or stable meanings. Raymond Bellour writing about Deleuze's philosophy, quotes Roland Barthes, 'the novelistic without the novel,' linking this description to Deleuze's mobilization of concepts, which he believes give a novelistic rather than a historical account of the cinema (Bellour 1997).

<sup>10</sup> Gilles Deleuze (2001) *Pure Immanence, Essays on a Life*.

<sup>11</sup> 'Becoming' is Deleuze's term for when an identity is divorced from history and embraces a state of change which produces an opening on to what Bergson named the *plane of immanence*.

<sup>12</sup> See Robert Stam, Robert Burgoyne and Sandy Flitterman-Lewis (1992) for a comprehensive breakdown of these cinema codes, principally those postulated by Christian Metz.

<sup>13</sup> These are what de Certeau calls 'cross-cuts, fragments, cracks and lucky strikes in the framework of a system' (de Certeau 1984).

<sup>14</sup> The phrase '...on the complex ways in which cinema interacts with life' is borrowed from Godfrey Cheshire, *Abbas Kiarostami: A Cinema of Questions*. 1996 41-42.

<sup>15</sup> For example, categories for the factual moving image are limited to the documentary; the news report; the political feature; the video diary; the cinematic essay; and, at a stretch, the film poem. At a 2007 conference at Loughborough University called *The Cinematic Essay* the entire plenary session was devoted to the question: What is a cinematic essay?

<sup>16</sup> *The Eternal Frame* is a videotaped reenactment of the assassination of John F. Kennedy. The comment came in response to the question 'What are you making here?' posed by a passer-by.

<sup>17</sup> Grosz adds that 'What the scientific spirit seems unable to tolerate is its own will to power, its own reactive requirement of the freezing of (biological or temporal) becoming into the form of knowable being, determinable identity, predictable structure - the impulse of much contemporary Darwinism' (Grosz 2004: 111).

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<sup>18</sup> B. Narahari Rao (1994: 8) writing on Ryle, suggests that 'one has to find a way of presenting the thesis that exemplifies the thesis, i.e. for the reader the process of coming to understand the thesis must be such that he simultaneously comes to appreciate the insight meant to be conveyed by it.'

<sup>19</sup> According to Deleuze and Guattari, in *What is Philosophy?* (1991), three elements are needed to do philosophy: the spiritual automaton (non-habitual, machinic thought); the plane of immanence (the space for becoming; the arena for new thought; and the conceptual persona (an intermediary agent with which to generate thought).

<sup>20</sup> Robin Nelson, speaking at the *Articulating Media As Research* conference (South Bank University 2005), uses the film *The Divine Horsemen: The Living Gods of Haiti* (Maya Deren, Teiji Ito, Cherel Winett Ito 1985) as an example of how the social sciences triangulation model can accommodate embodied knowledge. The practitioner sits at the top corner of the triangle with tacit knowledge of art (as intention) and unfolding phenomenological experience. In the bottom left corner is the artists' critical reflection of their tacit knowledge, and also of events and outcomes as they arise. In the bottom right corner is the conceptual framework for the art that is being made. All corners of the triangle are knowledge producing and at the centre of the triangle is the artwork itself. There are constant relational encounters between each corner, and also, with outside elements (for example, changes in the artists' personal life). Maya Deren travels to Haiti, in the established role of avant-garde and ethnographic filmmaker. She shoots numerous reels on location, but also keeps a detailed notebook, filled with diary entries to do with African ritual dance and her own experience. When combined, the notebooks and the potential film (the film rushes) become an embodied, practised theory of filmmaking. In fact *The Divine Horsemen* was edited by Teiji Ito and Cherel Winett Ito after Deren's death, assembled on the basis of her notebooks. Nelson argues that process of art when intertwined with its object and the documentation of its making (including hesitations and revisions) equals practice as research, and any art object is lacking a dimension if the process and context of its making is not evident in some way in its final outcome.

<sup>21</sup> The result of this is that many do not feel that they are filmmakers unless they are in the act of making a film.

WOMAN  
You're staring again.

MAN  
I feel awkward. I don't know what I'm supposed to be doing.

The WOMAN stares at him. He looks extremely shiny, (better grading) and evenly lit, in perfect focus.

WOMAN  
Say that again.

MAN  
(stilted)  
I - I don't say anything now.

WOMAN  
Don't you think the way you talk is false? Listen to you.

The MAN stands up. Lens flare distorts his face as he appears to be re-laced into a projector. ~~The WOMAN hears coughing off camera again.~~ She takes the MAN's head in her hands and kisses him, clasping his face - using the kiss to get close enough to whisper.

*rain shadows play*

WOMAN  
Sssh.

MAN  
I - I don't say anything now.

WOMAN  
-sshhh! There is someone here.. I am not making it up.

The WOMAN places her hand over his mouth (her video hand against his film face). She looks around the room suspiciously as she edges him along, almost as though he is her captive.

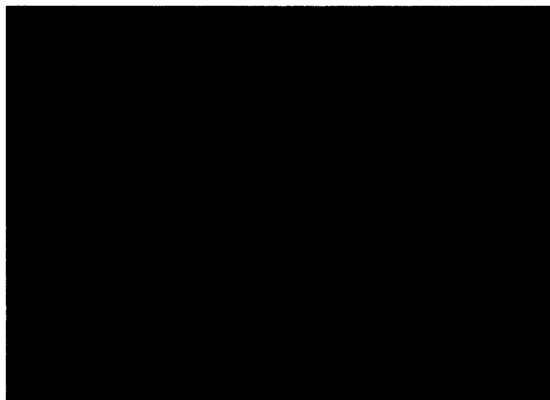
WOMAN  
Sssh. Stop. Stop- don't do anything.

She looks across the room, her features quivering in a video pause in which the vertical hold judders. Slowly the door re-positions itself ajar, to a gaffer cross on the carpet. The WOMAN glances back at the MAN. He is paused absolutely still. His image begins to melt in the light of the film projector bulb. The WOMAN shakes him. The MAN judders into motion, scratched and faded - an old film print, with cuts and joins. His soundtrack warps. His body slips in the projector gate, revealing black spacer. He steadies himself.

WOMAN  
Are you all right? You look exhausted.

MAN  
I don't feel well.

A clapper-board claps in front of him and he flinches.





There's something wrong with the position of things.

(The Woman, *Of Camera*)

1895. *L'arrivée d'un train à la Ciotat* (Lumière Brothers). The moving image arrives as an eruption for cognition, both thought-like and world-like in its arrangement, an anomaly for the brain, a gap in perceptual regulation that makes a fissure in thought possible by way of a virtual plane, where time is given within time and space within space. It was this trick of resemblance (principally through the medium's indexical properties) that, when coupled with persuasive narrative forms, gave the cinema such tremendous psychological, cultural and economic power. The staged play, the touring sideshow and magic show, the literary narrative, renaissance perspective and other aspects of the visual arts combine in the cinema to form a peculiar and phantasmagorical captive space for our senses. But this is an art form whose temporality is most unlike the rising and lowering of theatre backdrops, or the recital of a musical score - a film can be freeze-framed and still remain legible, whereas a stage play or music track cannot. Above all other influences, it is the particular directions photographic technologies took towards the end of the nineteenth century that most significantly shaped the cinematic form. Muybridge's photographic mobile sections and Marey's slices of marine time are the root of the twenty-four frames per second cinematographic mechanism - Zeno's paradox at last given form, in autopsy. Time is under the knife. The cinema, beneath the apparel of the theatre and other high and low culture, is a machine for devastating time, for suspending and reanimating its flow. Its greatest capability is the denaturing of the lived world, from the place of bearing a striking likeness to it. Let us first of all give our attention to the conventions developed for taming this rogue temporality, before moving on to the potential for affect in such rogue moving-image arrangements, and the possible methods available to moving image makers for overcoming what I will argue is the trap of resemblance.

Perhaps the most striking convention the cinema adopted in its infancy was its general attitude towards temporal distension. As William Uricchio has stated, the history of early cinema is in fact the sustained suppression of cinematographic temporal anomalies in relation to the lived world (Uricchio. 1997: 6-8<sup>1</sup>). Concepts and invented applications for cinematic liveness, simultaneity, time-extensivity, and the unaltered durations of actuality that sprang up in the last part of the nineteenth century were all quickly passed over by film producers, in favour of canned, truncated, end-of-the-pier styled plots. Words such as 'canned,' 'truncated,' and 'sutured' (the stitching together of spaces in time) connote a body forced into being and required to fit, and this is one way in which we might look upon the rapid advancements and modifications to cinema technology over the period of the medium's first twenty-five years: as a potential that became customized at the behest of forces that found little commercial value in irregularity. This was a concerted effort to develop an identifiable cinematic 'proper', a mechanism that could tame and regulate the profound displacement produced by the cinema's acoustic and optical presence but physical absence.

This is what Tom Gunning refers to as the 'new sense of anxiety' (Gunning 1990: 58-59<sup>2</sup>), brought about by the medium. One example of this anxiety is the much mythologized account of an audience running from an auditorium when confronted with the Lumière Brothers' image of a train approaching. As David Rodowick has proposed, rather than the threat of impact provoking the audience to react with fear, it might have been the experience of witnessing a 'cut' in space, tearing the viewer's perception from one shot of time and space to another through the end of one shot and beginning of the next (Rodowick 1997). The 'cut' heralded a new fragmentation of time, a fragmentation that had to be rendered as subordinate to movement in order to delimit audience distress. Actions, movements and narratives were needed to bridge what was always at origin a shock to thought: the edit interval. Therefore, Action imperatives formed the basis of classical cinema, where any wayward movement was recognized and corrected. No sooner than the cinema emerges, than its movement in time is delivered to the viewer as sensible.



I can no longer think what I want, the moving images are substituted for my own thoughts.

(Georges Duhamel, quoted in Deleuze 1989: 166)

The producers of cinema quickly looked for a closed set of innovations that would constitute this cinematic proper - a system that could either contain or erase the absences and aberrant qualities of the moving image. Syntaxes of looks and joins were formulated by filmmakers, who developed specific formats for stories that would suspend the minds of the audience whilst giving momentum and structural integrity to the film as a unit. This superimposed syntax included the suturing of shot to reverse-shot, the evolution of complex levels of narration, and the deployment of tried and tested narrative arcs which are all now familiar to us as 'cinematic.' A mental form of consumption was produced for the audience, so that a large portion of thinking is already being done by the film text, as story, and as mise-en-scène. What Deleuze terms the *action-image*, or *movement-image*, became a viewing habit, and the semiotics of cinema a set of approximate signs. It is as though producers and directors formed a mutual agreement with the collective viewer: we will regard cinema as having a language if you do, especially as it suits our apparatus. And yet there is nothing rational or linguistically sensible about the way in which the cinematograph conjures movement from a series of still images, or abbreviates time and conflates topographies. Rationality is something that was impressed upon the moving image, with the compression of lived experience into scenarios populated by recognizable faces, and reinforced by what Eisenstein termed 'impossible continuities' of movement in space and time, where the camera is always where it must be, a perfect eye that disregards architectural order and physical or temporal causation. The invention of the edit made day become night, far become near, tomorrow become yesterday, perception become recollection, all in an instant. Once cameras became light and portable enough to leave behind the fixed, front-on view of the shooting stage, the jib crane and dolly brought omnipotent movements and positioning to the image. We do not question the movements of a camera on a crane or moving smoothly along a track because the film as a text is thinking and acting for us, along a teleological continuum that, although not sensible from the outside, appears to have sense during the act of

viewing. The frame of this cinematic proper is psychologically acceptable, even though it is rarely or never physically possible within either the on-screen diegesis<sup>3</sup> or the world of our own experience. Not one of the aberrant attributes listed above has a correlate in the lived world and yet these new shifts and movements were rarely articulated as phantasmagorical values *in themselves*; seldom do we find an instance in this period where a shot tracks through space simply because it can. The cinema's wild utterances, what Marinetti, in his 1916 *Manifesto on Film*, celebrated as the 'anti-graceful, deforming, impressionistic, synthetic, dynamic, free-wording'<sup>4</sup> properties of the moving image, were systematically made to speak reasonably. And so the cinema as an idiom became naturalized to consciousness.

Although experimentation for the most part was determined by political and economic pressures, ideological beliefs, psychological suggestion, and the consensus that the cinema be a popular form of entertainment, the rate of innovation in the moving image between the turn of the century and the mid-1920s is nonetheless remarkable, perhaps unparalleled by any other emergent form in the history of art. In Edwin S. Porter there is the discovery of the syntactical unit of cinema as the shot (rather than the theatrical scene), and the groundbreaking invention of crosscutting. His re-edit of *The Life of the American Fireman* (1903) took concurrent events that, previously, were situated before and after one another in the timeline of the film, and made them appear parallel to one another. This is now one of the most familiar tropes of the fiction film. The 'narrator system' (Gunning 1990) found its form in the logically unfolding screen spaces of D.W. Griffith's films, where the film operates as though told to us, providing select information, binding space through corrected eye line matches, and extending space into concurrent activities and flashbacks whose use and arrangement is always sensible. We observe that time palpably *lapses* in Georges Méliès' films, images are condensed, dissolved and superimposed. Méliès was one of the first to identify the inherent difference between screen-time and real-time, a difference that he recognized could lead to misrepresentation. The camera takes on a vibrant physicality in the work of F.W. Murnau, strapped to moving objects, distorted by mirrors; it was Murnau who discovered the first and third person camera, which was pivotal in terms of generating a narrative

style still observed by Hollywood today, a century later. In short, an encyclopedia of cinematic effects was written, not only for the shot but also for its assemblage. Lev Kuleshov developed the metaphorical and associative power of montage, noting that shot-to-shot relations could create unity in the mind of the viewer even though the image sources were not always themselves contiguous. Kuleshov's student Eisenstein made a behavioural science of dialectical montage, what he called a 'montage of attractions' that would assure specific thought responses in the viewer. This is why Deleuze dubs Eisenstein cinema's Hegel. His five-tier system of montage: metric, rhythmic, tonal, over-tonal and intellectual, deployed a form of dialectical montage as Kabuki series (borrowing from the Japanese pictogram). These series, Eisenstein declared in *The Film Form* (Eisenstein 1949), would produce chains of conditioned reflexes in the viewer, a comprehensive theory of film editing constructed for the education of minds, what Eisenstein termed the 'potentialities of dialectical development' (Eisenstein 1949: 55).<sup>5</sup> *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) contained 1346 shots, more than twice that of an average Hollywood feature of the same length, and advanced hitherto unknown sensations resulting from the cut.

All of these filmmakers have in common the fact that they regarded the cinematograph as a tool for mental and emotional persuasion, and each, to varying degrees, attempted to develop a model for production that would suspend customary mental activity and elicit specific thoughts in the minds of the viewers. In *Gilles Deleuze's Time-Machine*, David Rodowick elects Buster Keaton's *Sherlock Jnr* (1924) as emblematic of a classical cinema that had 'perfected its geometry of forms, its logic of spatiotemporal exposition and its "laws" for linking up actions through montage' (Rodowick 1997: 3). Keaton's character Sherlock Jnr is a down on his luck film projectionist who, in one famous sequence, falls asleep at the projector and ethereally enters the film he is projecting. In his analysis of this sequence, Rodowick describes how Keaton's on-screen activities from shot to shot are linked not by diegetic physical logic but rather by a 'rational' division based entirely on action and movement. Sherlock becomes quite literally carried along by each edit, so that, for example, we see him stand up on a rock in the sea and dive into the water, only to be 'cut' to a winter landscape, where his body plunges into snow. This

sequence is the logical extreme of physically incommensurable spaces connected through an interval that is the edit and by the imperative of character action, through narrative progression.

As Rodowick observes, the fact that audiences identified fully with the movement of a character, rather than concentrating on the incommensurable slicing of space, assured filmmakers that 'the continuous unfolding of adjacent spaces' would not be received as abstraction or as skews in temporality (Rodowick 1997: 3). In *Sherlock Jnr*, irrational arrangements are made rational through movement linkages, always subordinate to a rhythmic totality. Sherlock may be passing through impossibilities, but the method of his physical conduct is that of edits which are consistent within a closed set. His objective as a character presents a plane of identification superior to the on-screen irrationality. And so, although extraordinarily sophisticated on a level of experimentation with the possibilities of the medium, ultimately the experiment is contained. That is not to say that this period is without exceptions. Germaine Dulac, for instance, in *The Seashell and the Clergyman* (1928), which was conceived by Antonin Artaud, executed an impressive array of camera movements, lens alterations, and melodic first person editing in order to convey disorientation and uncertainty.<sup>6</sup> But predominantly the ambiguous mental and spatial relations made possible by the cinematograph and the edit interval remained either under-explored or subservient to narrative, which became the normative element. Moreover, the system for producing narrative unity in the cinema sought compatibility with the preexistent system for producing cognitive unity in the viewer's mind.

Cinema is the sole experience where time is given to me as perception.

(Jean Louis Schefer 1980<sup>7</sup>)

'The Mechanism of our ordinary knowledge is of a cinematographical kind' wrote Henri Bergson, who used the cinematographic apparatus as an analogy for how the intellect arrives at a comprehension of reality (Bergson 1907: 332). Bergson's philosophy states that reality is movement itself; there is no discontinuity between consciousness and matter because all matter is in a constant flux of becoming along what Bergson terms *a plane of immanence*, which is

duration, 'Matter [...] is an aggregate of "images." And by "images" we mean a certain existence which is more than that which the idealist calls a representation, but less than that which the realist calls a thing - an existence placed halfway between the "thing" and the "representation"' (Bergson 1911: 9). It is only our perception that produces immobility and immutability in forms, for, beneath the apparatus of our own perception, matter, as it emerges in time, is an infinite sheet of an interwoven material, a sheet that we, as perceivers, are only separated from by our habitual thoughts. Bergson gave this instrument for perceptual separation the name *sensory-motor schema*, what Žižek has called a distorting screen that always 'falsifies' our access to external reality.<sup>8</sup>

The sensory-motor schema is close to something Bergson terms habitual recognition; through perception and action a person is always looking to progress productively, and progress comes through making approximate causal links based on prior experience. The sensory-motor schema is a spatialising mechanism that adapts the body to the erratic nature of image movements, a cause-and-effect tool used by the brain to regulate the signs presented by the lived world, separating and then re-connecting consciousness with matter, re-presenting sense as meaningful data by projecting pre-existing order onto sense perceptions.<sup>9</sup> This act of necessary *compression*,<sup>10</sup> given the obvious scale of available sense material, performs a 'written' of the real that edits out pure duration, and the image thus constantly sinks to the state of cliché, reconstituted as approximation, precisely so that we do not perceive everything (everything being the sheet of matter and time which is Bergsonian immanence). Deleuze writes: 'The sensory-motor schema effectively retains from the thing only what interests us or what extends into the reaction of a character [...] it is grass in general that interests the herbivore [...] It is in this sense that the sensory-motor schema is an agent of abstraction' (Deleuze 1989: 45<sup>11</sup>). So, too, is the cinema an agent of abstraction, more exact and more predictable than the real world, an arrangement of orderly units prescribing a response. Bergson disparages any commonality between film and the intellect; he states that both systems take 'snapshots of reality,' each forming habitual representations rather than intuitive ones, editing out 'the form which the succession of

our conscious state assumes when our ego lets itself live, when it refrains from separating its present state from its former state' (Bergson 1889: 100).

Normative classical cinema reinforces a mode of lived time that came into being around the beginning of the twentieth century, when time took on a particular palpability following the advent of industrial timekeeping. As Mary Ann Doane states in *The Emergence of Cinematic Time*, "'temporality" was structured in modernity' (Doane 2003: 4). Industrial time, labour time, the wristwatch, and the classical cinema are all markers for a normative bracket of experience. The very duration of the commercial feature film is an agreement in time, with its optimum one hundred minutes. By extending the subordination of time to movement, the developing narrative cinema replicated the logic of the sensory-motor schema. It is for this reason that Bergson did not regard the cinematographic process as having anything to do with duration. Like his model of habitual thought, its technology involved a before and after lineage, the result of which could only ever be cliché. Bergson said that the real life of cinema is in the motor of the projector, not in the film. His comprehensive dislike of cinema was predominantly material (photographic); he did not like the conception of static frames advanced by a machine to produce the illusion of movement. The cinema, for Bergson, was nothing but a sub-standard replica of the commonsensible mind, a purveyor of crude sensations titillating the viewer with the pleasure of being presented with apparent coherence. Commonly, habitually, we experience pleasure when presented with coherence and continuity, which, in the cinematic transaction, is given in story form. The structuring and articulation of cinema evolved in line with the most pleasurable and compatible form of reception, that which perpetually looks for order and for recognizable movement. We experience displeasure at unresolved things, for example, when a story is interrupted or left unfinished, and so a classical film works to re-clarify and resolve events. It labours to maintain spatial properties, always in terms of the human, or, more accurately, the more than human. Classic film narrative involves constructed characters operating in accordance with narrative directives, their movements called into action in response to direct situations, with all superfluity removed. Similarly the mechanism of the sensory-motor schema has taken control

of aberrant movement, so much so that it has become the most routine kind within our everyday perception. The 'sameness' of the sensory-motor schema is extended and completed in the sameness of the clichéd film text - the cinema impresses a regularity onto its shots that is in many ways consistent with a regulated nature of thought in the mind of the viewer. Bergson's turn away from the medium in this respect is prophetic in terms of the turn dominant cinema made away from the aberrant and transformative, towards the habitual and proscriptive.<sup>12</sup> Action comes in response to stimulation but is informed by association; movement is that which responds to being moved, where perception, through affection, becomes action. The movement-image closes down the possibility for an *affect-based* response, which, in Deleuze is a movement in response to a movement before such a transaction can be mastered by thought. Although we as viewers are continually offered what Deleuze calls *affection images* - the most striking among affection images being the emoting human face, seen in close-up, in the Hollywood star system<sup>13</sup> - there is very little or no possibility for a reactive, fluid movement of thought or of body, for the face registers as meaningful almost instantaneously, owing to its position in relation to the following and the preceding shot. This is why films lacking characters in close-up often fail to emotionally engage an audience, but instead provide space for thought.

Deleuze maintains that the sensory-motor schema had no precedent frame of reference when first confronted with the movement and the interval of the moving image, and so it created two systems, or new signs, what he calls *noosigns*. The first sign was tamed and made compatible with the movement-image, an image that, for Deleuze, has long been an exhausted one, but one that endures through repetition in capitalism. According to Deleuze the first modern of the cinema, which spanned thirty years (what Deleuze refers to as the civilization of the cliché), defaulted to generic ideas of an unconscious, simplifying the lived world and making generic assertions as to the nature of its inhabitants. As Virginia Woolf said in her disapproving and astute remark on the cinema, 'All of romance is reduced to the image of a kiss.' The trick of classical cinema is to use sleights-of-hand that erase the origin of their articulation as they proceed, producing engagement based on a familiarity of content and the utilizing of absent

signs.<sup>14</sup> This is the cinema of persuasions and manipulations, which provokes Deleuze to group together Hitler and Hollywood, Eisenstein and Griffith, Soviet Realism and Capitalist hegemony. Paul Virilio, too, regards the movement image as being linked from the very beginning to the organization of war, state propaganda, fascism, an apparatus whose thoughts follow a predetermined path, one which leads ultimately to civil control. This cinema helped manufacture an image of a nation or of a State, together with an image of a people, and, the mode of thought and consumption of such a people, who are ultimately the servants of that nation or State: Newsreel footage; Leni Riefenstahl's *The Triumph of the Will* (1935); the fear-mongering public information film *Duck and Cover*; *Dick Tracy*...

Deleuze takes from Bergson the concept of immanence and tries to find its existence, or at least its possibility, in the moving image. He discovers in Antonin Artaud a fervent voice of dissent against classical cinema. Artaud was fascinated by the idea of cinema as a kind of automated thought quite different to that of Eisenstein's dialectical montage, or the Surrealists' celebration of the cinema as hallucination. He writes, 'I shall not try to excuse the apparent inconsistency by the facile subterfuge of dreams' (Artaud 1976: 20). Artaud believed that Eisenstein, Buñuel and Dulac were misguided in their models of montage and their depictions of mental states and interior self-representations (Artaud famously fell out with Germaine Dulac over her realisation of his screenplay for *The Seashell and the Clergyman*). He wrote a number of inflammatory texts on the cinema, outlining several existing types of film: dramatic Cinema (where poetry is suppressed); the Documentary (which was also lacking in poetry); the Cinema itself (which is yet to come). He stipulated that cinema must avoid two pitfalls: abstract experimental cinema (which was developing at the time of his writing) and commercial figurative cinema (as exemplified by Hollywood).<sup>15</sup> 'The human skin of things, the derm of reality – this is the cinema's first toy. It exalts matter and makes it appear to us in its profound spirituality, in its relationship with the mind from which it emerges' writes Artaud (1976: 21). What Artaud was looking for in his *Cinema of Cruelty*, he eventually gave up on. Deleuze discovers what he believes Artaud had envisioned, in the post-war era: a cinema capable of provoking thought other



than into a tired realism or an image of the unconscious. He calls this *time-image* cinema, a fundamentally new form of editing based on irrational intervals. Deleuze outlines this irrational time-image as 'the *unsummonable* of Welles; the *inexplicable* of Robbe-Grillet; the *undecidable* of Resnais; the *impossible* of Marguerite Duras; the *incommensurable* of Godard (between two things)' (Deleuze 1989: 182). These attitudes and fragmented assemblages constitute a second modernism in Cinema, in which it is agreed that neither time, nor history, nor interiority can be represented, and where, rather than closed, the whole of the film is open and placed in direct relation to the outside; the pressures of time and the very limits of the medium are felt within and around the frame. This second *noosign*, however, appears in shocked response to the cinema of the *time-image*. This *nooshock* is time itself - a sign created by the movement of a rogue *spiritual automaton* (Deleuze borrows the term from Spinoza<sup>16</sup>) within the mind of the viewer - a cognitive machine of thought whose potential is precisely that of the cinema of displacement. Spiritual automata are the linkages of ideas, as they invent one another in the mind, outside of the psychological consciousness or the identity of the thinker. In their emergent form they are therefore not systemic or comparable to a self or to consciousness. The first nooshock produced a spiritual automaton that was contained and 'became fascist man' (Deleuze 1987: 164). The second nooshock let loose a spiritual automaton on the world that creates time-images which are free to roam as not-yet-thoughts. They have the propensity to take the thinking viewer closer to an immanence of unthought.

This is the regime of universal variation, which goes beyond the limits of the sensory-motor schema to a non-human world where movement equals matter, or else in the direction of a superhuman world which speaks for a new spirit... What has happened is that the sensory-motor schema is no longer in operation, but at the same time it is not overtaken or overcome. It is shattered from the inside. That is, perceptions and actions ceased to be linked together, and spaces are now neither co-ordinated nor filled.

(Deleuze 1987: 40)

Although the manifestation of time-images is uncommon, Deleuze seems to suggest that they are latent within all movement-images, in transitions and spatial impossibilities, and that they are available to consciousness if the nature of thought in relation to the image is changed.

For Deleuze it is the time-image that will reclaim the very aberrations and discontinuities the movement-image sought to deny, and release the mind from rational thought in the film spectatorship dynamic. It is the unmotivated edits and instances of pure duration within such a cinema, and its capacity for suspending and interrupting habitual thought, that arouses Deleuze's interest so greatly. How can one think thought in relation to its temporality, Deleuze's philosophy asks, and what is it that calls forth thinking?<sup>17</sup> One method is cinema, in that *film can help us think thought*, provided that it resists thinking for us. These then are Deleuze's two cine-semiotics: the *movement-image*, which is Hegelian, dialectical, and always couched as a totality; and the *time-image*, which 'messes with time,' resists proscriptive thoughts via dialectical montage and instead is irrational and directed towards an open-whole, where uncommon and new thoughts are possible.

The actions of the movement-image derive from a belief in the possibility of action (its supremacy) and the stability of Truth. Deleuze argues that with the scarring events of WWII this belief changes. This, he says, can be evidenced in Italian neo-realism, which presented a crisis in the cinema of action, shooting the *any-spaces-whatever* (Deleuze 1989) of bombed-out Europe, and showing to audiences the changed psyche of the human being.<sup>18</sup> Neorealism made way for a new cinema, one that was not bound by action or movement but instead broke with the dictates of narrative to explore pure optical and aural situations, and direct images of time. In Rossellini's *Stromboli* (1949), new narrative situations appear at the point where reality is represented as an empty space or a missing part (the tuna fish sequence, for example, which, in its graphic horror, tears the character and our engagement away from stable ground). Movement is repeated and repeated and then brought to a standstill in Maya Deren's *Ritual in Transfigured Time* (1945-6) and Alain Resnais' *Last Year at Marienbad* (1961). In Welles we find crystalline temporalities (*The Trial*; *Citizen Kane*), where the story eternally divides and divides again, into the past and the future, now a Nietzschean discourse, where the edit as a hook for consciousness is no longer cogent. Time is delivered as a-centred and crystalline in Andrei Tarkovsky's *Mirror* (1974) and Nicholas Roeg's *Don't Look Now* (1973), or as a singularity, where motion and history are merely mental relations, in Chris Marker's

often quoted *La jetée* (1962). Aberration within the world-like and thought-like apparatus of these film texts creates disruption in the mind regulating that text; the dialectical relationship is lost, although not entirely, as is the case in structural-materialist and abstract film. In the itinerant form of Rossellini, Antonioni, Akerman or the crystalline and repetitive rendering of events in Resnais, Welles, and Duras, Deleuze finds nonsensical gaps and wayward camera orientation, where sheets of present, past and future co-mingle and the film itself seems to wander from any ruse of centrality, now almost a consciousness itself, but one with amnesia.

If Bergson, Nietzsche and Spinoza are among Deleuze's philosophical forebears, Pasolini, Deren and Tarkovsky are the practitioners of his thoughts, generating cinema as poetry, rendering reality with reality, deploying a free and indirect discourse of cinematic speech-acts where it is no longer possible to discern between the subjective experience of the character and the director's expression, and where sequences frequently cut between fictional and actual elements. The action/reaction schema of the movement-image here begins to break down, the Newtonian Universe is cast out, and orderly time is fragmented like so many facets of a shattered crystal. The time-image disconnects from the activity of correcting aberration within movement, and in doing so creates a shift or rupture in the sensory-motor schema, which, as Deleuze puts it, tears a real image from cliché. In the time-image, the Whole is open and it belongs to time. 'If our sensory-motor schema jam or break, then a different type of image can appear: a pure optical-sound image, the whole image without metaphor, brings out the thing in itself, literally, in its excess of horror or beauty, in its radical or unjustifiable character' (Deleuze 1987: 21). This cinema has an errant composition, one that denies the viewer purchase through narrative and reveals instead the originating subject and the goal of art, which is thought - not the representation of thought, nor the taming of thought, but an opening onto 'what does not let itself be seen in vision' (Deleuze 1987: 168), or that which cannot, or has not yet been, thought.

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<sup>1</sup> See W. Uricchio, *Film's Fate: a storage medium in a culture of simultaneity* (*Impact 1997 Catalogue* (1997): 6-8). Uricchio proposes that cinema may not be solely indebted to the photographic, but also to the telegraphic - that cinema could have been much more to do with extensivity rather than with storing and holding an image. Without the apparatus to realize this idea of the live moving image, the cinema, writes Uricchio 'abandons the project of the now and moves over to the fictional,' to become more about representation than television ever would (Uricchio, from a lecture given at Harvard University, May 2005). Uricchio gives several examples of how cinema attempted simultaneity before defaulting to the dramatic form, including a novel 'live' mobile cinema, installed in a double-decker bus.

<sup>2</sup> This first cinema, the cinema of attractions (according to Gunning) is a sideshow-like popular and participatory cinema. This type of cinema is eroded by the dream industry of Hollywood, whose narrative form destroyed the carnival aspect of the cinematic event, by isolating an audience and prescribing their experience.

<sup>3</sup> The term 'diegesis' comes from Greek word for 'narration' and was applied to cinema by Étienne Souriau. As Metz writes, it means 'the sum of the film's denotation' (Metz 1974: 97-98).

<sup>4</sup> In *Vita Futuristica* (1916), Marinetti and director Arnaldo Ginna used mirrors, superimposition, split screens and hand painted dots to distort their images.

<sup>5</sup> Deleuze deduces four styles of montage from the movement-image: the organic montage of Hollywood, the dialectical montage of the Soviets, the extensive or quantitative montage of the French impressionists, and the intensive montage of the German expressionists.

<sup>6</sup> Surrealist films such as *L'Age D'Or* (Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí 1930) offered hallucinogenic arrays of pictorial assemblage.

<sup>7</sup> Jean Louis Schefer (1980) cited in Deleuze 1989: 37.

<sup>8</sup> Deleuze discovers in Bergson, via Kant, that the SM-S has become the most orthodox method for responding to sense data. Kant has argued that space and time are the *a priori* forms of human perception, meaning that the spatial and temporal properties of the objects we perceive do not derive from sensory data, but from our mind's own way of interpreting sensory data. Umberto Eco has his own term for this process, the 's-code': the system-code that 'makes a situation comprehensible and comparable to other situations, therefore preparing the way for a possible coding correlation' (Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics*. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1979: 40, 43-44). A film becomes in time and simultaneously becomes as language and meaning. Without cinematic S-codes, there could be no secondary codes, such as narrative.

<sup>9</sup> Rodowick writes that 'Our subjective prehension of things, then, takes place as a "contraction of the real", through the agency of memory in its two forms: one where layers of recollection surround a kernel of immediate perception; the other which condensed disparate historical moments into a single point' (Rodowick 1987: 88).

<sup>10</sup> *Compression* is the term I use to describe both the way in the brain uses the SM-S to reduce sense data and the way in which classical narrative uses short cuts and nodes of information to give the sense of a richer and deeper world of characters and occurrence without having to present them.

<sup>11</sup> As Hollis Frampton writes in *Circles of Confusion*: 'A waterfall is not a "thing", nor is a flame of burning gas. Both are, rather, stable patterns of energy determining the boundaries of a characteristic sensible "shape" in space and time [...] You and I are semistable patterns of energy, maintaining in the very teeth of entropy a characteristic shape in space and time,' (1983: 11)

<sup>12</sup> Deleuze celebrates modernist cinema's manifestations of time-images, extending Bergson's philosophy of intellect/intuition, matter (perception) and mind (memory). Bergson did not live to see the non-linear, discontinuous and multifarious narratives of the 1990s and new millennium.

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<sup>13</sup> Again, we can refer to Buster Keaton, whose face appears deadpan in close-up, as though defying our need to be affected.

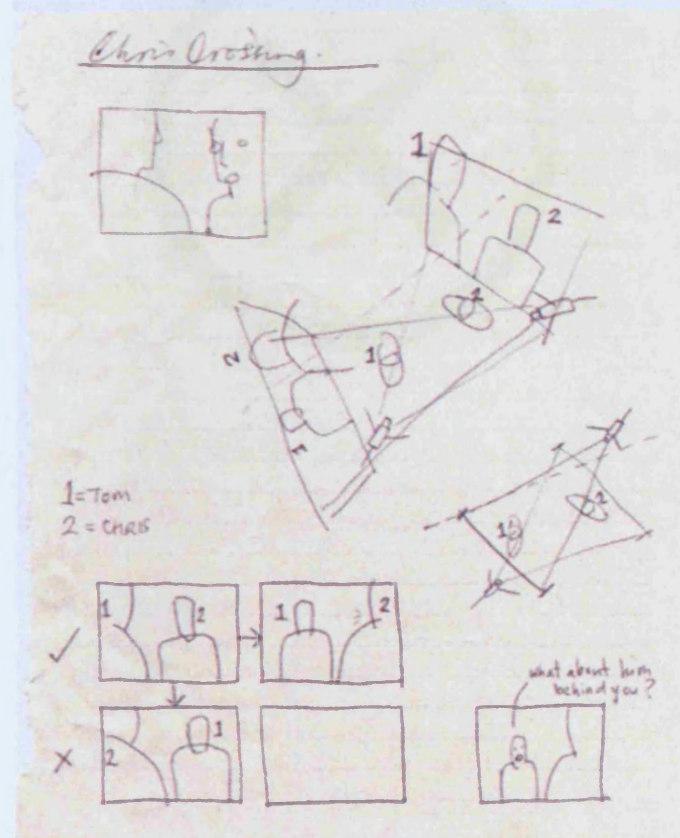
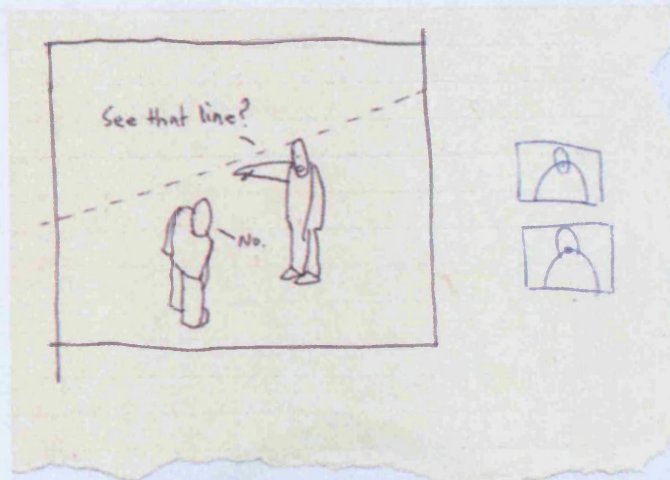
<sup>14</sup> Only now filmmakers compulsively reveal them, in DVD extras. In fact, we dislike or fear losing cinema's trick of sensibleness when watching a film but then delight in errors of sense and order after the fact.

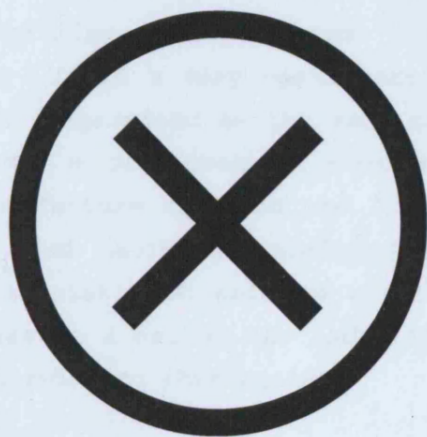
<sup>15</sup> Artaud became enthusiastic with the cinema and its possibilities as an art form whilst working with Carl Dreyer (he was the lead actor in two of Dreyer's films), but this enthusiasm dissipated by 1933, when he abandoned the cinema in favour of the theatre of cruelty.

<sup>16</sup> Rodowick describes this as 'machinic thought' linked to our own machine of thought. Rodowick goes on to clarify that, 'The spiritual automaton is in no way equivalent to a psychological consciousness, nor can it be construed in the forms of identity' (Rodowick 1997: 175).

<sup>17</sup> Here, Deleuze is particularly Heideggerian.

<sup>18</sup> This nooshock is coupled with changes in our scientific understanding of brain functioning, and with advances in the crystalline attributes of quantum physics.







I am sitting watching. In a Chinese cinema in Milwaukee I am sitting watching. I am in a large deserted auditorium watching a matinee screening of *The Ladykillers*, the 2004 Coen Brother's remake of the classic Ealing comedy. It is a very poorly articulated film, but my engagement is further compromised by the fact that the projectionist has failed to correct a registration problem. Every few seconds throughout the entire feature duration the film jumps and slides in the projector gate. I am having overwhelming difficulty in access, like Keaton's projectionist, not able to enter a building, to gain entry to the room that is called *The Ladykillers* - because, as it opens, the door keeps swinging shut again.

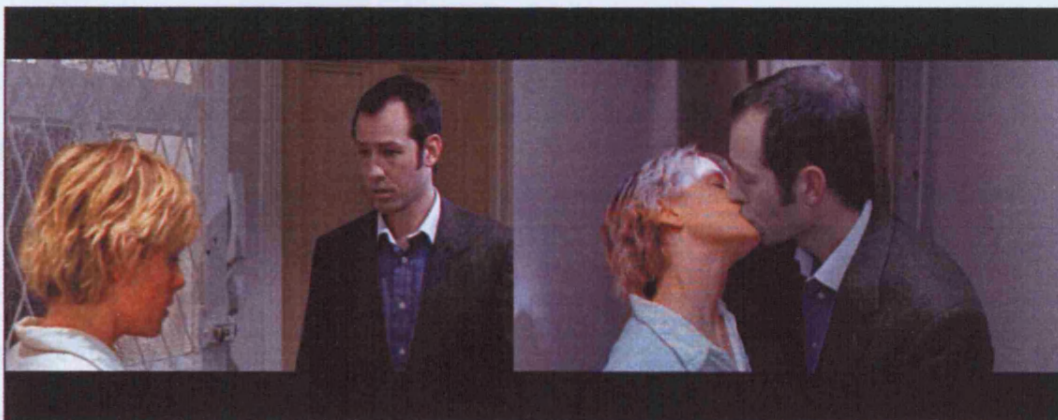


The word camera *derives* from the Greek word 'kamara,'<sup>1</sup> which means chamber or vault (or bedroom, in the modern usage) but also has root fragments to do with taking and with transporting. A classical film is a series of 'takes' which are durational renderings of spaces (interior, exterior, virtual), customarily populated by protagonists busily conducting themselves in accordance to a plot they are conveyed by. These takes are *sutured*, stitched together to constitute the impression of a temporal and diegetic Whole that extends out as a logic and a world, beyond the arrangements we are being shown. The camera creates the impression of a three-dimensional moving space on a two-dimensional surface - a room in the lens and on the screen. This is a spatial system that developed from nineteenth-century stage space, where the room was the natural centre of dramatic action. It was André Bazin who stated that the cinema reverses the spatial operation of the theatre, going from outside to inside as it establishes a scene (Bazin 1967: 100-7<sup>2</sup>), and, as Edward Branigan writes, 'It is clear that film could in certain ways more actively develop the reproduction of room, of mobility from room to room' (Branigan 1992: 232<sup>3</sup>). The cinema room consists of a continually collapsed unseen rebuilt into a seen, where the diegetic space and the fourth wall of the camera are perpetually reinstated in the reverse shot, what Stephen Heath describes as 'The summing of a space that always joins apart, elsewhere' (Heath 1981: 152).

Cinema is founded on this mode of presence in absence, in that the camera that was present erases itself in the reverse shot and is further eradicated by way of the edit. As viewers, we have developed the complex ability to complete this space by overlooking the suturing of space and time conducted by camera and edit. We know that only eyes or the camera have the means to see what we are being shown, but we have let go of the logic that what we have seen needed eyes or camera to see. We accept this even if the room on-screen is an empty room, where there are no character eyes to see and show us what they see. In other words, we do not notice the lack on which all of classical cinema is constructed. We have

allowed a synthesis between our minds and the suturing process, and if this process collapses, for example, when the camera 'crosses the line' during a shot/reverse-shot sequence and a performer consequently switches orientation in frame when reversed, occupying the same side as their counterpart, that synthesis is de-stabilized. It can be lost entirely.

*Of Camera* (Eastwood 2003) explores the abortive attempts of two people, a woman and a man, to be together in the same space. Their situation is a disagreement fuelled by technical difference: the woman exists on analogue video and the man on celluloid film. The two protagonists are at the point of failure in a relationship. Gradually the woman realizes that not only she and her counterpart are emotionally irreconcilable, but also that they are literally incompatible: they are merely on-screen characters who are being recorded, edited, played back and watched by a director and crew, an editor, and an audience. The film takes place in one interior, which comprises of four rooms, a corridor and a stairway landing. We never see the characters outside of this environment, and it is not entirely clear where each of the rooms is situated. Topographically, the woman is boxed into a film system and we are looking in from the outside of that system, eavesdropping on a character that is becoming aware of others who are present and investing, to varying degrees, in either her plight as a fictional character (can she or can't she reconcile her differences with the other character?) or her plight as a mediated subject (can she or can't she find stable ground within the mediation system she is experiencing, as she encounters and slips into the intervals in her videotaped materiality?).



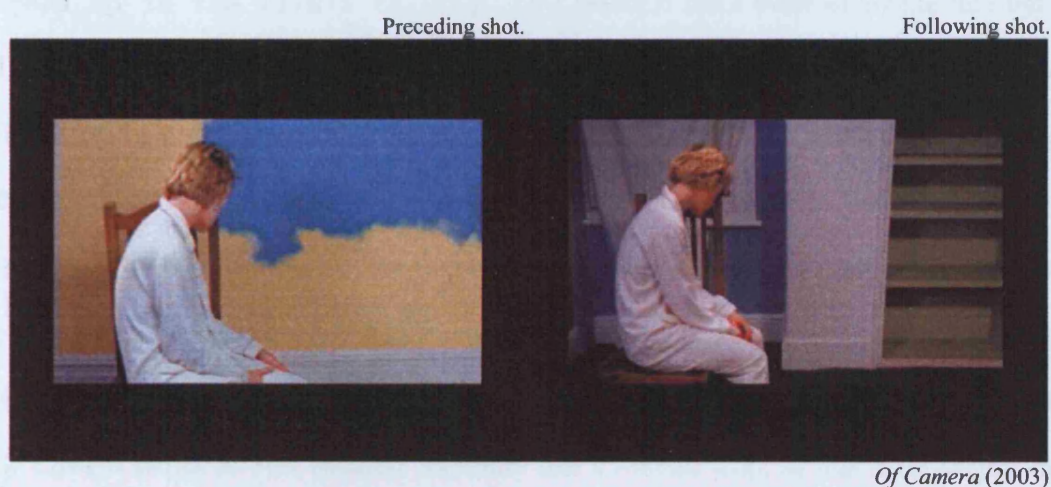
*Of Camera* (2003)

*Of Camera* has the outward appearance of a short drama, with the aesthetic and tonal qualities of film noir. The lighting and the colour of the film stock reference mid-career Alfred Hitchcock (*Vertigo* 1958) and Michaelangelo Antonioni (*Il Deserto Rosso* 1964), amongst others. The film opens with a hook: a woman is at home one night by herself and begins to suspect that there are intruders in her house. She makes an anxious telephone call and requests that the person at the other end of the line comes to the house to investigate. This develops into a plot twist: the people in her house are the people making the film, and there are a number of subtexts including the hanging question of whether the couple will reconcile their differences and come together to face the traumatic situation of their mutual disenfranchisement from the cinematic system they have been drafted in to. Dialogue, musical score, key lighting, costume, and *mise-en-scène* suggest that the film will develop and resolve the issues it announces, but the film does not find a resolution. There is the residue, then, of a Hollywood form of telling, but the recognizable cues (the aforementioned score, decor, wardrobe, romantic encounter) are misappropriated; they register as dissonance, as extra-linguistic; their boundaries are fluid. Key lighting and sound properties are unsuccessfully deployed, as though they have come in at the wrong moment, or belong to another film altogether. Exterior sounds are married, as room tone, to interior spaces (we hear traffic in the hallway); non-diegetic foley sounds, including VCR player eject mechanisms, and rain on a window that becomes applause, are con-joined to practical elements on screen.

Topographical certainty, which is most commonly arrived at through a correct sequence of establishing shots - wide shot, mid shot, and close-up (all monitored in terms of their continuity) - is undermined. The positional blocking of the characters in relation to one another is inaccurate, and the 180° rule is frequently contravened. The pre-filmic space is continually implied from the space of the pro-filmic, a *seen* which is never entirely foreclosed and delimited by suture, so much so that shot/reverse-shot series often involve the appearance and disappearance of props (notably a red chair) and the uncomfortable shifting of



composition in frame. The result is a crooked house whose changing walls, shifting details and narrative false starts threaten the loss of topographic balance in the minds of the audience. The device of the match-cut, where an edit is based on compositional similarity (a technique favoured by auteurs such as Hitchcock and Stanley Kubrick and used to startling effect in Luis Buñuel & Salvador Dalí's *Un Chien Andalou* 1929), is challenged by extending compositional likeness to compositional *sameness*: the Woman retains identical position in frame (see film stills below), and is oriented to the same chair, but across the interval of the edit she is relocated to a completely different room. She appears directly to experience the shock of this absurd movement. Unlike *Sherlock Jnr*, there is no progression for the character; there is instead the shock of the return of the same as difference.



*Of Camera* deals with the waning of indexicality and the different ontologies of analogue video and film images. The film presents not only the existential crisis of two characters but the impending demise of analogue video (the woman has the property of worn vhs videotape), and of celluloid film (the disappearing man exists on a 16mm projected film print) and the new temporality and binary notation of computer algorithm (both characters are isolated by rota-scoping and treated digitally by the manipulative power of computer software and filters). This is an unwieldy and purposefully inconsistent metaphor: if the Woman is on video and the Man is on film, what medium is their background, and what media construct the

objects they might hold in their hands? At one point the woman kisses the man and her video attributes momentarily transfer to his body.

This transference of matter between beings is a Deleuzian situation in itself: the point of *becoming imperceptible*, which is the immanence of becoming in time as a being that is not as distinct from its exterior as it believes.<sup>4</sup> The properties and systems of classical cinema here extend outwards, revealing themselves to the audience before eventually folding in, so that the story and the characters are swallowed-up by the absent centre which constitutes all classical cinematic telling. When the Man stops still and burns in the projector gate, the film has stopped, stopped itself, from the point of this absent centre. For a moment the character is erased and a gap opens up in the film's telling. *Of Camera* is not a piece of architecture but a Trojan horse, one that unpacks as it unfolds on the screen. With its deceptive structure, the film is wheeled into a screening context only to collapse itself from within, disassembling, from dynamic, action-oriented and outwardly mobile system to introspective failing system; from narrative to *dysnarrative*.<sup>5</sup> The film fittingly ends by *incompleting* itself, taking the main protagonist in fast-forward beyond the credits and in reverse, back through previous sections, until she insists that this activity cease, and her image fades into video noise, and then black. *Of Camera* twists its own narrative trajectory like a Möbius strip, so that it encounters the other side of its story, which is the film's construction. It does this not merely reflexively but as the completion of its set, of its geometric existence. This is the balance of the equation: cinema as imbalance. The vernacular of the movement-image is effectively inverted, so that it is the phantasmagorical value of cinema *in itself* that forms the basis of the film.

*Of Camera* declares how a breakdown in a personal relationship can alter the way in which we situate ourselves in the other's space: 'Can you move, can you stand over there,' or, 'I think we should swap places.' The 180° rule is broken, but so too is the rule which separates the intradiegetic from the extradiegetic (i.e., what separates the complex arrangements of

looks and positions within the internal story world on the screen and the looks and positions outside of that world, on the set of the shoot<sup>6</sup>); in other words, the place the performer/character cannot look at or go towards (the camera), is manifest in the social situation. One form of seeing, what Heath calls the 'quasi-obscenity' of seeing (Heath 1981: 154), which is the camera seeing with ultimate efficiency without having presence, is thus transformed into another seen. In short, the internal consciousness-like spatiality of the film becomes awry and we are left with the knowledge that the film is a thing that is doing the seeing. The audience can no longer rely on the mechanics of impossible continuity to transfer them from one cine-situation to another, because in the organization presented in *Of Camera* the engineering of the movement-image is grinding against itself and twisting on its own axis, destroying itself from the inside out, daring to transgress its own limit. The function of impossible continuity has broken-down, revealing false continuities, or the non-localizable relations of shots. By making a problem of the intra-diegetic in cinema, *Of Camera* makes naked the waltz of repositioning performed by actors and technicians in the cinematic operation, dancing solely in order to convey the simple command that A is looking at B.

Artaud is astute when he notices that 'the cinema presents us with an incomplete world, shown only on one side' (Artaud 1972: 77). In classical cinema, the lack of two-shots or contextualizing wide angles in a scene (for example, in *At Five in the Afternoon*, Samira Makhmalbaf, 2003) reads as topographically unstable against our understanding of the proper function of a dramatised cinematic sequence. We therefore read from the film an interior uncertainty, even though our own social transactions never involve over-the-shoulder shots (we are inside the SM-S, not stood before its screen). James Chandler suggests that the over-the-shoulder shot is a technological method in line with eighteenth-century ideas about how we form a sentimental sense of an other, by imagining their situation and conforming to social contracts of proximity between speaking but non-intimate persons (Chandler 2005<sup>7</sup>). In *The Address of the Eye*, Vivian Sobchack writes, 'Indeed, as if to avoid any possible confusion and conflict between its material body and the character's, the film's body generally situates itself

close to but behind the character's body in what is commonly called an "over the shoulder" shot' (Sobchack 1992: 226). The over-the-shoulder shot is close, but not too close; in other words it is close enough for the viewer to feel involved without being crowded. Thomas Bedding made the point during the review of a film in 1909 that the shift to closer camera positions made it necessary that film actors never recognize the presence of the camera, as this compromised the viewing pleasure of the spectators in their belief that the characters were 'inside' the film world, participating in a real event.<sup>8</sup>

In *Chris Crossing* (Eastwood 2003), the observance of a correctness of social space is presented as a dispute within the interaction of the characters, in that one tries to explain to the other the crossing-the-line rule of cinema. It is also a dispute within compositional alignment, in that the characters cross the 180° line as they argue. The character Chris remarks that, 'Scenes in normal fiction films are structured around shot and reverse-shot. The over-the-shoulder shot helps locate the two people in the scene. If you just get one person's point-of-view, and then the other person's point-of-view, it can be a bit disorientating, like they're not really there.' In the films of Ozu, Oshima and Antonioni we frequently see empty and amorphous spaces that have lost their Euclidean co-ordinates.<sup>9</sup> In *Tokyo Story* (Ozu 1953), it is no longer clear who is speaking to whom, who is in front of or behind whom. The shot, the frame, eye-line matches, and 'intra-diegetic looks' (Heath 1981) all stray towards a limit, which is the interval. The classical cinema can never in fact deliver a convincing point of view arrangement, because our lived-body perceptions are crystalline in event: sheets of present perception, distraction, daydream, recollection, bodily compromise (there is something in my eye as I look at you), blinks, adjustments to brightness, the movement of the eye in the turning of the head, and so on. Yes, film resembles the behaviour of thought unlike any other art form, and often, in classical cinema, is constructed as though it is consciousness recorded (flashbacks, POV shots, the interpenetration of image and sound). But the cinema cannot adequately present to us the constant flow of the thoughts

of the on-screen inhabitants of the cinema world, only their words and actions. Any attempts to concretely situate the viewer in the apparent consciousness of a protagonist fail categorically, as Sobchack outlines in her analysis of Robert Montgomery's *The Lady in the Lake* (1946), which is an entirely first person noir feature.<sup>10</sup> We are too passive to achieve full physical empathy and would need to be more fully embodied when we watch a sustained point-of-view shot in order for it to succeed as an equivalent to our perception.

Through irrational organization however, a new relation and arrangement of looks that can be thought of as sexualized shows its face. This is what Heath finds in *Ai No Corrida* (Oshima 1976), where intra-diegetic space is problematized by the breaking of the 180° rule, and, during the lover's intercourse, particularly when the servant looks on (and is caught looking) the geography of the bedchamber is made confused.<sup>11</sup> Rather than trying to perpetually drag the pre filmic into the frame to create unity, Oshima's film presents the splitting of the seen, or the endless 'nothing seen' (Heath 1981: 152). This creates a look which sends back and loosens the relay circuit of what Heath explains as the camera-viewer-character triad; '...the apparatus is pulled out of its true, its guarantee of vision; the look divides and the spectator loses the view of the film... the viewer then knows what it is to be seeing the film' (Heath 1981: 153). In *Blow-Up* (Antonioni 1966) the fashion photographer crouches down in the park and then looks up. The image cuts to his view of the wind in the trees, and holds on that shot, until the photographer stands up and enters its frame: the seer has been displaced from the seen. In *Stalker* (1979), Tarkovsky neatly sidesteps the entire difficulty of the seer-seen relation, introducing a character who *will see* by first of all having the Stalker look towards the camera, his back to the view, before turning his head around and seeing what we have already seen behind him, thus removing the need for a point-of-view shot. A new room altogether is assembled from the shot/reverse-shot spaces of a previous feature film in Natalie Frigo's *Dinner with the Stranger* (2006). Marguerite Duras' *India Song* (1975) shows to us the complex relationship between the pro filmic and pre filmic space. Expression is outside of the frame (we hear the shamed Consul's cries), and Duras is



making use of the longing we have for what is not in view. The mirror in the ballroom offers to us the reverse shot in the shot. A locked-off, palatial, architectural camera points into the pro filmic room, but there is another kind of camera, a haptic camera, which moves across bodies and the space.



*Chris Crossing* (2003)

Howard Hawks said of *The Big Sleep* (1946) that so long as each scene fizzed and moved along nicely, nobody would really notice or care that the wider film made no sense in terms of plot. The film functions on a scene-to-scene basis, but when reflected upon, it does not constitute a Whole; there is no unified story to recount. This is what makes *The Big Sleep* one of the most radical Hollywood films ever produced, because it points directly to the cinema as an appearance. There is a 'storytelling function' that Deleuze derives from Bergson (Deleuze 1990), a utility within intelligence that makes an order of that which occurs between intelligence and society, or the lived world. A story is an orderly configuration, a schema through which an infinite number of occurrences may pass, not least our selves, as thinking subjects. Deleuze makes the case that this capacity for building narratives from chaos forms precisely that which enables any society to remain stable, and this is an argument that has been made an innumerable amount of times for a religious rather than a secular society. The narratives we have fashioned for our highly complex social interactions can be seen as extensions of the compressed units of sense rendered by the sensory-motor schema. Edward Branigan's account of what constitutes a narrative is close to Bergson's description of the SM-

S: 'Narrative is a perceptual activity that organizes data into a special pattern which represents and explains experience [...] a way of organizing spatial and temporal data into a cause-effect chain of events with a beginning, middle, and end that embodies a judgment about the nature of the event' (Branigan 1992: 3<sup>12</sup>). In fact, the comparison between sensory-motor scanning and the organising principles of media can be extended to the current method for authoring moving images to DVD. This process of data compression looks for similarity within sequential film frames or inter-laced video fields, in order to duplicate existing picture detail rather than continually re-render it. For example, a landscape sequence may in fact feature very little movement, and therefore can be more or less copied as data from frame to frame. If a more profoundly moving object such as a bird enters frame, the compressor has to work harder to render its detail. It is for this reason that rapidly cut or densely superimposed structural films and scratch videos are extremely difficult to author as DVDs.

Classical cinema is founded on the organizing principle of the inventory, from script to shot-list to storyboard, to schedule to edit decision. A drama shoot is a closed set.<sup>13</sup> Industry feature production is like joining the dots of the shooting script, under time and economic pressure. On a drama shoot there are a number of cells needed to concoct a defined whole. Shoot days are broken up into the logistical realization of these cells, which are numbered and, when shot, re-assembled in order in the edit suite (they would commonly have been filmed non-sequentially). In the edit suite something peculiar happens. In the pursuit of a closed and hermetically sealed narrative Whole, an infinite series of possibilities opens up. Of course, within the film industry this is rarely the case, as the editor is given a template to work to. And this is what Deleuze calls the logic of enchainment, narrative as schema, that which constitutes a kind of geometry of cinema, within which the hero 'only acts because he is the first to see' (Deleuze 1986: 70). We begin with 'violence' (Heath 1975), a contrary to the norm that must be worked through towards unity (Greimas 1968<sup>14</sup>). There has been a violation and the course of the narrative will follow either the reinstatement of the old homogeneity, or the founding of a new one, for 'every narrative re-enacts cultural beliefs about success.' (Branigan

1992: 25). The schema of story is so identifiable that all the viewer or reader need do in order to arrive at meaning is look for assigned probabilities to events, and recognize pattern through repetition and rhyme, what Barthes calls the logic of the, 'already read' (Barthes 1988<sup>15</sup>). In *Cinema and Philosophy*, Alain Badiou gives a concise account of normative cinema, or 'neoclassical cinema' as he puts it (Badiou 2003: 111), and its predilection for pornography, the unit of families and romantic couplings, the depiction of excessive violence, and hackneyed plots (what Godard, and then Deleuze, called 'bad films').

*Of Camera* opens with the classic violence that Heath speaks of, a disruption in homogeneity producing lack for a protagonist, the kind of lack that classical cinema is fuelled by and relentlessly mines. As we have discussed, the brain uses story as a structure for memory and as a means of orientation, because this structure enables us to remember more and in greater detail. Heath writes that 'without narrative, the memory of a film fails' (Heath. 1981: 170). The viewer retains the initial disruption to homogeneity as a remembered platform on which to locate events as they unfold. The cinematic proper thus acts as a secondary sensory-motor device. When previous inferences are indirectly disconfirmed (for example, the frequent lapses of spatial and narrative continuity in *Of Camera*), an individual's attention does not spread equally along the narrative but works forwards and backwards more avidly through the text, attempting to generate hierarchical structures ('this means this' because 'that occurred then'). Branigan explains that 'In this manner a perceiver uses a schema to automatically fill in any data that is deemed to be "missing" in the text' (Branigan 1992: 15). However, unclear character goals require increased processing time, and as we have established, the brain always looks to find a shortcut, to hitch a ride on a habit. Unexpected information can cause a re-ordering in the schema, and comprehension slows when explicit propositions constructed earlier must be re-activated, as is the case in *Of Camera*, where the viewer must ask, and re-ask: Who is the Woman? How do I make sense of her environment and predicament? Why are her reactions not consistent? With its incomplete sentences and missing clauses, *Of Camera* draws attention to the language-like regulations of the classical

cinema it resembles but disavows. The *bottom-up*, material existence of the filmic process - its corporeality - enters into a conflict with the *top-down*, narrative operation that seeks to negate it.<sup>16</sup>

Classical cinema, as Heath puts it, is in essence the balance of repetitions, and narrative is the operation of this balance, 'the order of bearable repetition' (Heath 1981:154-157). For example, in the second scene of Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (1958), Scottie has visited his ex-girlfriend Midge. We have already seen the distressing moment where during the rooftop chase Scottie became paralyzed with fear, and injured. In the following scene, Scottie holds onto his cane, complains to Midge about his corset, comments on the spare time in his new daily life (now that he has taken early retirement from the police force), and finally fails in the test of ascending the mini-stepladder by the high-rise window without fear. Each element is the repetition of the same sign: incapacitation, emasculation and fear. Christian Metz speaks of pleasurable films, or 'good objects,' referring to Freud's theory of childhood play, where a child repeats an activity until it has mastery over it, thereby constituting the activity as good (Metz 1982<sup>17</sup>). Young children begin telling stories in heap and rhyme form, and this finds its correlate in the rote system of industrialized normative film narrative. As Joan Copjec writes 'The effect of repetition is clearly identification' (Copjec 1988: 233). The sensory-motor schema has a tendency towards constancy and so, when in the cinema, the adult acts in the same way as the child, having actions repeated for it and looking for pleasurable elements.<sup>18</sup> In fact, the very demand of commercial cinematic storytelling is constituted on an audience's desire to move from ignorance to knowledge. Copjec uses Duras' *India Song* as a way in which to examine what she terms this 'compulsion to repeat' (Copjec, *ibid*). The film passes us through all kinds of associative spaces, until we let go of frustration, give up on accessing narrative meaning by way of complicated and conflicting motifs, and let the film's formal repetitions act on us from a place of difference. The waltz that forms the spine of the film (a spine in a paralyzed and misshapen body) is itself the choreography of repeated movement. We re-enact things and revisit things in our minds in order to gain mastery over them, but, as

Copjec argues, Duras' film offers no possibility for mastery. The narratorial element is omnipresent, but it has lost its authority. Burning incense has more vivid movement than the human bodies, who are stopped and started again, in an automatic time.

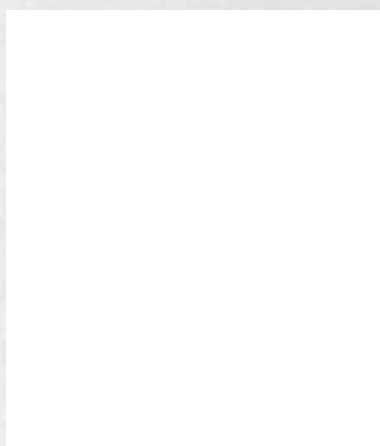
Film repetition in structural-materialist film most often takes the form of content-less loops, flash frames of arbitrary sameness, exemplified by Tony Conrad's *The Flicker* (1966). Structural film rejects balance as a necessary audience disposition, although it uses operational systems of its own to hold a viewer in a state of non-identification. Its strategy is to evict any dramatic or content-based scene, in order to grasp instead film in the process of its material effects. So much structural-materialist cinema appears socially disengaged and perceptually preoccupied with fixated looks, away from others, looks that are regressive and obsessive - a retrograde seeing - what Lacan might have regarded as infantile, pre-linguistic babbling. Almost all structural-materialist films remove the agency of the viewer and close down their bodies much in the same way as Hollywood narratives. Flicker films or formal inquiries into exploded fields of vision render experience captive in a manner opposite but equal in measure to the effect of generic classical narrative. The viewer's experience for transformation is chastened - we find ourselves a part of a peculiar cult that stares without focus into space, probing every pixel or grain of celluloid as though stargazing. The constancy of the repetitive image can at times offer passage to other mental states, by way of its very minimalism, but for the most part structural film leaves the viewer with only introspective or reflective thought. In an uncertain film, the viewer strains forwards towards the film, willing it to find order, hoping again and again for the false starts to become the actual race, which can and must be run to completion.

One ideology, the Hollywood film, suspends and stabilizes the viewer as subject; the other, structural-materialism, activates the viewer as subject in the process of viewing. In *Questions of Cinema?* Heath asks, what are the apparatuses of these establishments? Both structural film and Hollywood cinema production (and their interpreters) have tended to focus

their analysis on the 'unity' of a film, i.e., either the meaning structures and conveyance of fiction narrative or the unity of process and textual/textural articulation in structural-materialist film. Classical cinema uses frames of reference in a sequential arrangement of impossible continuities of space and time that are not determined solely by local conditions. Bottom-up receptivity is largely subordinate to top-down configurations of psychological persuasion - the activity and result of its meaning, not how it means, an obsessive regime of pro-filmic unity in which everything seen has semiotic value. What Branigan terms the *levels of narration* (Branigan 1992) which form this arrangement begin with the very identifying logo of the film studio and progress through film titles, the crediting of performers and key technical personnel, text captions (for example, 'London. 1940'), establishing shots (for example, the city), symphonic melodies, the voice of a narrator, closer shots/interiors, the voices of performers, and so on, ensure that nothing remains surplus by the time of the closure of the film text. Unnecessary components, such as hairs in the camera gate are eradicated from the ensemble. All image and sound errors are corrected. The on-screen, or in-screen, diegesis is constructed and maintained by these narrative agencies, giving the viewer a sense of organization in the film image, and also a pleasurable identification, which is in part borrowed from Lacan's mirror phase, where the child, upon seeing its reflection, finds itself in a liminal phase in which she or he recognizes themselves as both the world *and* an other, who is perceived by an other. The cinema is, according to Metz and to Heath, a 'secondary' mirror phase (Heath 1981), in that the viewer is already aware of his or her own presence, and is able to be receptive to a 'reflection' that gives everything back except the self. The image is not, after all, a life. Not yet, at least.

In *I Make Things Happen* (Eastwood 2001) and *The End* (Eastwood 2002), both protagonists are scaling the ladder of the levels of narration. *The End* features a performer who has undertaken an urban pilgrimage through the film in search of the end credits, which she eventually encounters and for a time co-exists with. Where customarily the textual element (supplied by the narratorial system) sits in commentary on, but separate to, the

diegetic space, here these textual layers fold into one another. The text becomes a character and the character is revealed as a text. The moving image always sits in a peculiar plane between, on the one hand the added visual elements of text and graphics and, on the other hand, the non-visual elements such as diegetic and non-diegetic sound. As Raymond Bellour writes, 'The image is indeed located, with respect to the echo it might receive from language, half-way between the semi-transparency of written titles and dialogue and the more or less complete opacity of music and noise' (Bellour 2000: 25). Indeed, *The End* provides a peculiar concertina effect of sound in relation to image, in that the audio is local to the performer, via a radio microphone, whereas the camera is far from the subject, and often cropped through the zoom lens. The members of the public the performer Ava Hervier encounters differ in response according to their relative knowledge of the camera. Each person approached is forced to quickly supply a meaningful reply to the question, 'Excuse me, can you tell me how to get to the end?' even though any apparent meaning or explanation is absent. They must each hypothesize a context: 'a club,' 'a mobile phone,' an end to the road, 'the end of time,' and so on. Here is Gilbert Ryle's 'wink' in context (Ryle 1971<sup>19</sup>). The final meeting of narrated levels is an awkward one, where protagonist and invisible narrator, performer and graphic element, sit side by side in a moment of anticlimax. The audience senses an ending before it comes and must deliberate whether or not to leave the cinema space.<sup>20</sup>



*The Searchers* (John Ford 1956)



*The End* (Steven Eastwood 2002)

Ethan Edwards (John Wayne) walks away from camera towards the caption 'The End' at the close of the *The Searchers*. In *The End* Ava Hervier reaches the end of her quest and finds the end of the film.



The trajectory of cinema as a history, and of the film theory that followed suit, involves the application of analysis, language systems, and, indeed, language to the medium. As we have ascertained, the course of normative films within that history is that of a plan of action applied to a schema: treatments, scripts, shot lists, storyboards, itineraries, inventories, plans, what De Certeau characterizes as a 'flattening out' of space and time (de Certeau 1984: 35). This flattened diegetic space, and its relation to extra-diegetic elements (such as musical score and on-screen text), has been the predominant arena of film theory for a number of decades. Metz went so far as to propose a *grand syntagmatique* of cinema, which was in part developed from Saussure's structuralism and aimed to isolate discrete units in the classical cinema transaction. In the *grand syntagmatique*, Metz outlines eight methods for how classical cinema uses editing to articulate and order narrative and makes use of specific semiotic elements within the shot and in support of the edit, including: key lighting, camera angles, *mise-en-scène* and musical score. He maintained that in fact all films utilize these principal syntagmatic 'types,' and claimed that documentary cinema and non-conventional narrative (Deleuze's second modern, or *time-image* cinema) were nothing more than the irregular use of this grammar.

Certainly, the film shot has the luxury of both a word-like and sentence-like appearance, but this linguistic appearance is complicated by with the inherently non-linguistic flow of the lived world the shot records. There is a fascinating reversibility at play here. In Metz, we find that there is no general in the image: writing the word 'dog' connotes a general category where the reader can mentally supply any dog, but a filmed shot of a dog will always exhibit the singular type of dog in view; it cannot fail to be specific. However, the written description of an event must use linguistic structures, whereas the filming of an event is never, in and of itself, linguistic, although it may have a linguistic interpretation. Our spoken and written natural language has never suddenly advanced; in fact it is very slow to change, and yet film 'language' can transform in months (for example, following the invention of the Steadicam, and more recent advancements in computer graphic imaging).<sup>21</sup> In the film *The*



*Hours* (Stephen Daldry 2002), itself a literary adaptation, there is a sequence in the opening montage which is bound by matched movements. Each of the three female protagonists, although separated by countries and by decades, is linked by a common behaviour: they touch their shoulders with their hands. A thought: try to think of this visual device as a literary one, where it is *written* that Mrs Dalloway touches her shoulder as Virginia Woolf touches her shoulder. No such compositional match-cut exists on the page.

Metz argues that the shot has the capacity to evolve into an identifiable morpheme of film speech, in other words a word-like, whole, and meaningful unit, with equivalence to a spoken or a written sentence, although he says that this has not yet taken place and that the cinema has no phonemes and therefore no actual words: 'There is a syntax of the cinema, but it remains to be made and could be done only on a syntactical, and not a morphological, basis' (Metz 1974: 67<sup>22</sup>). Metz makes a distinction, then, between cinema as a language and a language system, and in the *grand syntagmatique* attempts to systematize the cinema's word-like elements. Deleuze counters Metz by stating that a shot can never be a morpheme, precisely because it has no phonemes within it (no constituent noises, that, when combined, make up a shot-word or shot-sentence). Both agree that the shot is only in itself an utterance, and cannot doubly articulate in the way spoken language can (i.e., be both utterance *and* uttered), because its smallest unit is itself - precisely the shot, and only the shot - a duration that is already actively signifying, without a linguistic structure, by virtue of the fact that it resembles the world we perceive.<sup>23</sup>

But Deleuze regards Metz's structural position as denying the open-set nature of the shot, which he sees as pure potential. The shot's material essence of space (space in time) is, for Deleuze, part of a pre-linguistic perceptual gap that language has always existed in relation to. The cinema is a free-worlding and denaturing device, one that at its heart will always remain beyond the reach of systematization. The shot offers the viewer a bundle of

loose and indistinct information (this is dissimilar to the word) and therefore has a propensity for openness. In this sense, the shot is not at all like the word or the sentence, but might be more comparable with a rant or mumbling, a rambling statement that is complicated in form. Moreover, the shot is a physical thing, not a virtual thing - its existence in the projector gate, or as a video image on a screen, is not like the word printed on the page (although we do to some extent 'read' its form). Metz does concede that comparisons between the cinema and spoken/written language are problematic, and that there are significant differences between the shot/sequence and the word/sentence, the principal one being Deleuze's point of the lack of double articulation in the shot.<sup>24</sup> In *Film Language* (Metz 1972: 115<sup>25</sup>) Metz states that the shot is always the creation of the filmmaker, rather than plucked from a cinematic dictionary of phrases, and therefore is infinite in number, unlike any word, which, if it is to be understood, must derive from a glossary that is finite in principle, non-syntactical experimentation, or automatic writing notwithstanding.

The fundamental disagreement in thinking between Deleuze and Metz resides in their understanding of the pre-linguistic. Metz seems to regard the pre-linguistic as awaiting significance and therefore always appraised on how *not-yet-like* it is, whereas Deleuze offers that, 'There is no "like" here, we are not saying "like an electron," "like an interaction" etc. The plane of consistency is the abolition of all metaphor; all that consists is Real' (Deleuze 1986: 69). This plane of consistency is Bergsonian immanence, the realm of *matter-sense*, that which is sensible only to itself - it can never be sensible in language. Roger Dawkins describes this as an anterior plane that provides the foundation for Deleuze's philosophy of cinema and language: 'Codes are not an evident given in matter, and therefore matter can be considered independently of the linguistic function. In other words matter is "perfectly formed from other points of view"' (Dawkins 2002). In Deleuze's film philosophy, the pre-linguistic is not formless, and neither does it signal anything. In order for the film image to be sensibly uttered, or become utter-able, it must be constituted as 'narrative utterance,' and this

is where Deleuze and Metz share a point of view - that this narrative form is external to the structure of the image itself.<sup>26</sup>

In *I Make Things Happen*, the performer Jo Burlington (formerly Cripps) declares in the narration that if she can make the plastic bag move without touching it, 'The film will be good.' She is reflexively encountering the media limit situation of the film she is appearing in, speaking about the present tense of the image from the point of the edit, which is in the present of the film's future, but in the past of the event of the film's viewing. She, the narrator, can predict that a white car will come over the bridge and appear to her, the on-screen protagonist, because the filmmaker has already seen the car, even though the viewer has not. There is no syntactic structure in the shots, these are meanings placed onto the moving image - the shot and its sequence possess only wild meaning, language comes from the outside, in the form of competencies for extracting meaning from the image-flow, what Dawkins calls a system of 'rules of use' (Dawkins 2002<sup>27</sup>). Meaning is both enabled and constrained by various external institutions of ideas and contexts, for example, the association when entering an art-house cinema, when seeing an MGM logo at the head of a film, or when first witnessing a film. Meanings external to the film text are also constructed internally, within our consciousness, based on competencies of recognition, recall, and so on.<sup>28</sup> There is an anecdote by Emeric Pressburger (one half of the celebrated Archers partnership) where, having fled the Nazis, the writer returns to his home village in rural Hungary some years later and sets-up a film projector in a village hall. After running a film, Pressburger asks various villagers what they had made of the images. Many of them had not in fact seen the moving pictures on the screen at all.<sup>29</sup>

The filmic image is not a language or a code. The pro-filmic space, whether the architecturally robust room or the crooked house, is more than a story, and we must look, therefore, for the emergence of ruptures and gaps, where the chambers within, and the overall structure of the house of classical cinema are found to be highly combustible. Classical

cinema conforms to the sequence: *camera - room - self - house*, where the self of the film's identity, its mode of telling and its characters, is consistent with the house of the film, in other words its architectural order. But we are after impossible houses, and the errant spaces within places. A radical cinema follows the flight line: *camera - room - becoming - topographical uncertainty*. In place of the self, residing in a house (the theory of identity in Freud and in Jung) there is 'something else,' a liminal film - the becoming of the film as it burns up and collapses as a house. During a screening of the DVD version of *Of Camera*, the disc faltered whilst playing the distressed closing credits, stopping and starting without regularity and forming an unsettling and fitting extension of the pre-recorded events. Here, the body of the film text produces behaviour in the body of its vessel for playback, introducing further collapse, to the walls of the edit, and unexpected gaps in what had been a fixed temporality.



*Of Camera* (2003)



Rozz (W)

Saturday Exteriors. Crew call 8.30am for 9am turnover wrap 4.30pm  
(Randall and Ames call time 1.15pm - 3pm or 1pm if they want lunch) (Chris call time 10.15 am at 321 Maryland - 3pm) (Jeffrey call time 8.30am at 321 Maryland - 1pm) (Megan call time 4pm at 321 Maryland St - 4.30pm)

#### 321 Maryland Living room turnover 8am

13 Jeffrey by mirror. Long take. Defends. Looks out. 40 mins  
13A Jeffrey's POV of Randall and Ames getting into car 10 mins  
61 Wide. The crew thinking. 30 mins  
42 Down kitchen to living room w/ 2 pass-cams. 30mins

#### Misc exteriors

55. Wide shot where house was. Following Chris. Jeffrey. Ext Maryland St. 45 mins  
56 Chris falls over. Jeffrey helps him. Maryland St. 30 mins

#### Hardware 12.00pm

41. Jeffrey in kitchen. 45 mins

Lunch 1.00pm - 1.30pm

#### Exteriors. Chris to be driven to his home in separate car

Int car turnover 1.45pm  
15 Ames and Randall in car. 30 mins  
Int car.  
17 Chris in back of car looks out. 30 mins  
17A Chris opens driver door & gets in car  
Int. Sound Pick-ups. Sound dept turnover 3pm. 30 mins  
Laptop typing  
Cards shuffled  
Distant train

Misc exteriors camera dept turnover 3pm concurrent

18. House exterior. 321 Maryland St. 20 mins

#### Misc exteriors cont.

43. House exterior. 321 Maryland St. 20 mins  
18, 19, 20. Buffalo exteriors. Coming soon. Expert repairs. Chabone. 30 mins  
\*set up interior shot to be ready to turnover at 4pm for light

#### 321 Maryland Living room turnover 4pm

14 Megan and Katie. mid-wide. 20 mins  
Miscellaneous interiors  
63. A panel of blue screen blue. Effect. 50 mins  
Wrap 4.30pm

#### Sunday

#### Cast and crew call 10am for 11am turnover

\*Ask crew to bring going out clothes with elements of red  
\*Gregory to get lunch orders at 1pm and have food on set for 2.15pm

#### Nietzsche's

Bar 11am turnover

25. Chris POV. Passes toilet door. 15 mins  
23. Megan at Nietzsche's toilet door. (match cut to shot 22: Megan in Maryland Kitchen doorway Armed) 15 mins  
24. Chris dolly shot approach 15 mins  
25. Over Chris' shoulder on to Megan. 15 mins  
26. Chris. Listening and reacting. 15 mins  
27. Jeffrey Dialogue. He leaves. 20 mins

68A Jeffrey approaches Chris  
68B  
reversion Chris J POV 41A

68A Megan walking in snow into kitchen

*Like A House On Fire* (2006) - the shooting script as schema and list.

<sup>1</sup> The Greek *kamara* and the Latin *camera* are generally thought to derive from the Greek word *kampto*. *Kamara* can mean the roof of a vault, a covered wagon, and a boat with an arched cover.

<sup>2</sup> See also Deleuze. 1989: 161.

<sup>3</sup> The vanishing space of the room on screen, and matte painted scenery, also relates to Renaissance perspective.

<sup>4</sup> Tamsin Lorraine qualifies *becoming-imperceptible* as '...leaving behind not only the perceptible boundaries of the body but also one's conventional understandings of oneself, of others, and of one's world, in order to respond informing impact of imperceptible encounters' (Lorraine 1999. 188-189)

<sup>5</sup> The Trojan horse is a useful analogy both in terms of its spatial connotations and the idea of the gift as covert weapon. When *Of Camera* previewed at the Curzon Soho, London in May 2003 the cinema projectionist insisted, angrily, that the master Beta videotape I had provided was faulty or had been recorded over. The film begins with the image of video in fast-forward, which has the immediate appearance of error, of a faulty tape recorded over.

<sup>6</sup> In *Questions of Cinema* (1981), Stephen Heath proposes three looks in cinema: the camera, the viewer, and the intra-diegetic.

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<sup>7</sup> James Chandler, *The Affection-Image and the Movement-Image: the sentimental journey - the history of the sentimental*. Time@20 conference, Harvard University, 2005.

<sup>8</sup> In the on-line article, *Stars and Audiences in Early American Cinema*, Lee Grieveson writes that Thomas Bedding, editor of *The moving picture world*, noticed when reviewing a film in 1909 that when the cameraman 'puts his camera near the subjects ... you see what is passing in the minds of the actors and actresses' (Thomas Bedding, *The moving picture world*, 3 July 1909, quoted in Bowser, *The transformation of cinema*: 94). Grieveson continues, 'Alongside the shift to closer views, it was strongly argued from 1909 that actors should never acknowledge the presence of the camera so as not to destroy the voyeuristic pleasure of spectators and the belief that they were "inside" the film world, participating in a real event. The intensification of emotional attachments to characters, and to the actions within the film was the basis for audiences becoming attached to the actors who played those characters.'

Lee Grieveson <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/screeningthepast/classics/cl0902/lgcl14c.htm#fn36>

Uploaded 20 September 2002

<sup>9</sup> See, Deleuze 1989: 129.

<sup>10</sup> See Sobchack 1992: 230.

<sup>11</sup> Heath writes that 'Oshima's film finds the apparatus (of 'looks') and its terms of vision as problem, as a specific construction (not a natural reproduction)' (Heath 1981: 150)

<sup>12</sup> Branigan proceeds to subdivide narrative into four paradigms, or texts: narrative fiction (the novel); narrative nonfiction (history); nonnarrative fiction (many kinds of poetry); nonnarrative nonfiction (the essay). For schemas of story structure he refers to Tzvetan Todorov's five-stage model (*Tzvetan Todorov, The two principals of narrative diacritics, Vol. 1 No. 1* Fall 1971: 39) although we could equally look to Vladimir Propp, AJ Greimas, Joseph Campbell or any number of their Hollywood derivatives (Rob McKee, Dov Simmons). Tom Gunning's term the 'narrator system' accounts for how this system (from around 1908-1909) was determined by the need to deliver the psychological individuation of characters whose interior motivations helped propel the story forward, producing and in turn produced by, causal chains of events. As has been much theorized, this character individuation is almost exclusively male, intended for the edification of a male gaze (see, Laura Mulvey [1975] and Tania Modleski [1988]). Mulvey makes the point that any audience member, regardless of their sex, is gendered as male in terms of their identification with the 'look' of the film text, a process that echoes what Luce Irigaray calls 'the predominance of vision in our culture,' and leads to objectification and disembodied sexual relations. Heath writes that cinema and psychoanalysis are contemporaneous. Both are a specific construction of male desire structured on the riddle of the nature of femininity, with the female as the unknowable other, as the object of a desire. (Heath 1981:169). Therefore not showing, telling or representing challenges what Deleuze

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would call the Masters, or the male gaze. Irigaray writes that the *nothing seen*, i.e., the not masterable by the look, is threatening to male theories and practices of representation (always inevitably leading to objectification).

<sup>13</sup> When documentary filmmaker Nick Broomfield made a fiction film he detested the rigidity of the shooting script and schedule, complaining there was nothing open or unexpected about it.

<sup>14</sup> As Branigan writes, Greimas refines this, to say that narrative is 'a special working through of contraries, subcontraries, converses, and contradictories,' (Branigan 1992: 9, referring to Greimas & Rastier, *The interaction of Semiotic Constraints*, Yale French Studies 41 [1968]).

<sup>15</sup> Barthes writes that 'the logic to which the narrative refers is nothing other than a logic of the already-read' (Michelet 1988).

<sup>16</sup> *Top-down* and *Bottom-up* are terms film theory has borrowed from cognitive psychology, which differentiates social attitudes attached to identity (top-down) from material attitudes attached to activities not rooted in identity, principally of the body, which are not symbolic or meaningful (bottom-up). In the cinematic context, the order of the narrative is of a top-down form, and the material existence of the film in the gate of the projector is bottom-up in form.

<sup>17</sup> Metz (1982) describes how the cinema screen is a Lacanian mirror, a double of the double, a surrogate for our own doubled, reflected image. The film text can be divided into 'pleasurable' or 'un-pleasurable' according to whether it is a good or a bad object. This concept derives from Melanie Klein's theories of child development, and the young child having what it desires presented to it, or withheld from it.

<sup>18</sup> In 1970s *apparatus theory*, Jean-Louis Baudry argued that mainstream films encourage a regression to primitive stages of human development, the desire being to enter (in the auditorium) into a copy of early child wholeness and homogeneity.

<sup>19</sup> The wink in question is the distinction the perceiver makes between voluntary signal and involuntary twitch, appraised on the basis of a minute movement and most importantly, the context of the movement, something Ryle argues the cinematographic 'shot' lacks.

<sup>20</sup> The original concept for the videotape was to have the words THE END and the performer sit together for such a degree of time (perhaps 30-40 minutes) that the viewer would be forced to make their own ending, by exiting.

<sup>21</sup> In *New Vocabularies in Film Semiotics*, Stam, Burgoyne and Flitterman-Lewis write that 'To speak a language is simply to use it, while "to speak" cinematic language is always to a certain extent to invent it' (Stam, Burgoyne and Flitterman-Lewis 1992: 36).

<sup>22</sup> Metz's film semiotics made a key distinction between the *Cinematic Fact* and the *Filmic Fact*, the former being an economic and socio-cultural system of film event (and pre/post film event), the latter being a signifying text. Having made this separation, Metz localized his inquiry to the *Filmic Fact*, proposing five modes of film expression: phonetic sound; written titles; musical sound; noises; the moving photographic image. The only code

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constituted by Metz has been a syntagmatics of the image track.

<sup>23</sup> A double articulation in natural spoken language involves a first articulation, or a *morpheme*, which is the smallest formal unit of significance, for example, the word "cow". The morpheme "cow" is made up of *phonemes*, and phonemes are second articulations; they are noises or sound elements that do not in themselves have symbolic value. For example, the "c" sound, or the "ow" sound, in the utterance of the word "cow." Morphemes and phonemes shift in tandem with one another. Different pronunciations of the "ow" in "cow" will still be understood as "cow".

<sup>24</sup> The shot arrives in perception as a 'complete segment of reality' (Metz 1972: 115), a Whole, whereas a word is always the double articulation of its constituent phonetic sounds and the cultural recognition of these sounds in combination.

<sup>25</sup> In *The Imaginary Signifier* (1982) Metz makes the distinction between *énoncé*, which is a statement, and *énonciation*, which is a speech act, or as Joan Copjec (1988) intuitively, a 'speech event.' Copjec goes on to point out that explicit attention to a cinema statement makes of it an object, a pro filmic event which seems to come from nowhere, as though not said or announced by anyone, or indeed anything. Attention to a cinema speech act has the opposite effect, in that it uncovers a cinematic point of view at the expense of its historical specificity. Metz writes that, 'Shots are the creations of the film-maker, unlike words (which pre-exist in lexicons), but similar to statements (which are in principle the invention of the speaker)' (Metz 1972: 115). In fact, Metz's evaluation appears to discover more differences than similarities between spoken language and filmed or edited sequences; and yet he sticks to a linguistic method as his aid in categorizing the cinema. Although (unlike words) shots are potentially infinite in number and always unique to the invention of the filmmaker(s), and to the context of realization, their *word-like* nature is enough for Metz to believe that in time a lexicon will emerge, distilling the noisy and multitudinous shot into a dictionary of utterances. The semiotics of cinema has yet to achieve this, and Metz has subsequently been criticized for his catalogue and its narrow band of selected subjects (the Hollywood film).

<sup>26</sup> Deleuze offers two clear cinema signs, what David Rodowick calls Deleuze's 'pure semiotics' (Rodowick 1997): the movement-image and the time-image, neither of which is compromised by being required to articulate meaning. Deleuze writes, 'When we recall that linguistics is only a part of semiotics, we no longer mean, as for semiology, that there are languages without a language system, but that the language system only exists in its reaction to a non-language-material that it transforms. This is why utterances and narrations are not a given of visible images, but a consequence which flows from this reaction. Narration is grounded in the image itself, but it is not a given' (Deleuze 1989: 29-30).



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<sup>27</sup> As Roger Dawkins elaborates, 'What we are left with then are two notions of the pre-linguistic. The first is the pre-linguistic as an amorphous and syntactic matter, according to which a conception of language is based on the formation of this matter into substance. The second is a more positive notion of the pre-linguistic as the matter-sense from which signs are a product. In this respect the pre-linguistic is not a reflection of some ratified form, and thus there is more scope for creative expression. For this to be the case the pre-linguistic involves two principles: it is non-amorphous, but at the same time it is a-syntactic and a-signifying. The pre-linguistic in this second sense is the matter-sense of language, a matter-sense which proceeds not towards some pre-established expression, but towards the truth of an expression which is established at the same time' (Dawkins, <http://reconstruction.eserver.org/022/deleuze.htm> not dated).

<sup>28</sup> This is essentially a cognitive, pragmatic attitude to film semiotics that continues to seek an understanding of how film is understood, but declares this meaning cannot be found in the film text itself. Cognitive film semiotics (for example, the work of Roger Odin) can be seen to represent the next stage of semiotic film theory. It aims to model the actual mental activities/intuitive knowledge/competence involved in the making and understanding of filmic texts. This approach positions itself somewhere between the linguistic determinism of Metz and the rational autonomy that cognitivists confer upon film spectators.

<sup>29</sup> There are many such similar stories recounted by ethnographic documentary-makers, where a cine-literacy had to be demonstrated and explained to the audience. It is of note that not all cultures that are new to the motion picture initially fail to see or recognize an image. Some fledgling viewers concentrate their gaze in a selective or a "haptic" manner, choosing to scrutinize certain areas of the picture plane rather than investing in following character actions. For a fuller definition of the haptic gaze please see Act One, Scene 6: *Bleed - some unknown bodies without organs*.

Perhaps it is necessary to make what is before and after the film pass inside it in order to get out of the chain of presents... it is necessary to move towards a limit, to make the limit of before the film and after it pass into the film and to grasp in the character the limit that he himself steps over in order to enter the film and leave it, to enter into the fiction as into a present which is inseparable from its before and after.

(Deleuze 1989: 38)



The cinema of which we have been talking has the semblance of a language in its narrative structure and the formation of architecture in terms of its screen spaces; both are designed to elicit an orderly response in the thinking viewer. But these orders are contingent - their geometries also produce void spaces, they babble and are prone to slippage. When slips occur, whether intentionally or not, they can be fruitful. In the place of order, an unstable or collapsed architecture, and a more fluid kind of cine language can introduce gaps and voids to the mind and the peculiar sense of extension to the body. Just as the schemas in classical cinema provide monologue to our mental templates for data processing, the gaps that can occur in cinema have the potential to enter into dialogue with lapses in our own attentive recognition.

In *Matter and Memory* (Bergson 1911), Bergson describes an interval or a temporal delay in recognition between stimulus (perception) and response (action). He states that this delay is the very gap from where consciousness operates, a gap that is regulated by the sensory-motor schema, which is always looking to extend and mould movements from the lived world into habitual form. In Bergson, consciousness (the intellect) is that which manages the ceaseless flow of cause and its translation into effect. But this process originates within a cluster of centres of indetermination, from where perception comes into consciousness and action comes out from it. Deleuze develops Bergson's thought, stating that such an attentive recognition offers its greatest insight when interrupted, when it falls back into a perceptual gap or when it fails altogether.<sup>1</sup>

What of our intentions before we can think of them as that, and before they are exhausted as outcomes? In order for this undetermined nature of thinking to find space to emerge, a spiritual automaton is needed, to widen the gap, and it can be found in the new modern of cinema, where irregularities, errors, deviations and temporal eruptions are constructed by false continuities rather than impossible ones, and where we see blank

expanses off directly unfolding time delivering the film text as the becoming of its own duration, without articulation or sense. This cinema spiritual automaton slackens off the sensory-motor schema by disordering it, creating what Artaud in his own incendiary theory of cinema calls a *body without organs* (or BwO<sup>2</sup>), a consciousness brought about by disjunction and detached from the signifiable lived world. Deleuze writes, 'It is indeed a matter, as Artaud puts it, "of bringing cinema together with the innermost reality of the brain," but this innermost reality is not the Whole, but on the contrary, a fissure, a crack' (Deleuze 1989: 167).

A momentary glitch occurs in the temporal certainty of the film *Of Camera*: the female protagonist's smile spreads into a horizontal white line of video noise, at the moment before she is accelerated into fast-forward and re-wind. Several gaps are opened up and traversed: the story has been interrupted (this sequence is not *what* happens next, so much as *how*, in film or video physiology, what happens next *happens*); the physical image has been distressed, which produces image-lapses or deviations on screen; and the central character has found herself suddenly attentive to the space between media and character. The distress we are witnessing is two-fold: it is the distress of the character *and* the distress of the very video image she exists within. We see her reach out, touch, pull against the media attributes of video static and the roll bars of fast-forward; we hear her gasp, stunned and breathless, when her correct speed and position is re-instated. This intermediate space of distress is between one and another, between top-down and bottom-up operations, where medium and narrative coexist<sup>3</sup>. It cannot be envisaged, grasped or fixed.

*Of Camera* is not a love story, although it resembles one. Inter-character relations are unclear, there is the complexity of furtive looks, and the suggestion of coherent identities that may have histories and motivations, but the gender and dramatized emotional lives of the protagonists is not of as great a consequence as their deviant motion. What is of consequence is the indecipherability and fluidity of the characters. The gap they occupy puts the film body



of cinematic telling into contact with its outside, so much so that the inside and the outside become confused with one another. Applause is also the sound of rain; chemical marks on the film print are also character tears; the apartment floor is street pavement; the half redecorated wall of the living room is also a blue screen backdrop. The process of cinema production arrives as unwanted guest in the dinner party of telling as that which can never be fully shut out of the house of diegesis.<sup>4</sup> The regulation and containment of the moving image's wild properties is an activity that makes an enclosed place of its inherently excessive space. Classical cinema creates a corset for its own body, strapping in its frame. It makes a corset for the bodies on the screen, who, as performers cannot move too far to the left or too far right (they might step from their light), and who, as characters, have no time or scope for the mess of contingency which is *a life* (they never shit, and rarely choke on their words unless it has an explicit motivation). And, finally, classical cinema makes a corset which is the singular body psychology of the audience, who are now marked as unmarked, their identity implicitly constructed as male, heterosexual and white, their desires unified. This corset constitutes a synecdoche where the film body, corseted too as unmarked, has come to stand for the whole of the possible within the cinematic operation, thus refusing the activity of its intentionality and becoming.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, not only is the 'inhuman secret of the bodily mechanism' generally hidden from the film in its own perception, but it is also generally hidden from the spectator. That 'secret' emerges as a secret only on those occasions when the exact *material nature* of the film's body is either *interrogated* or *disguised* in some fashion that finds *explicit* expression in the film's perception [...] A peculiar and sensory disparity arises when the film attempts to reflect on its own material embodiment, or when it pretends for the sake of the filmmaker's *histoire* or the narrative to represent its own bodily *discours* as human in substance and conduct. (Sobchack 1992: 220)



The moving image is by nature a corporeal space, a porous space. It secretes, and is always threatening to leak through on to the tenets of classical cinema, making bodily stains on the film as a site of telling. Such stains - scratches, irregular mechanical ticks, corruptions, camera knocks, continuity errors, and so on - can enable the viewer to feel the exterior of the film, its diegetic excess, and to enter a cinematic body that is always between place, touching upon new ground, moving towards the very limits of the cinema itself. The gestural signatures of the film *as it is made* - its indexical marks, its corruptions, a digital code error, a fading of celluloid emulsion, video dropout - are the unthought intentions of the film, before they are removed, corrected, or worn out as outcomes. The Woman in *Of Camera* has touched the edge of her narrative rendering, slipped into the situation of time and space as improper - the category of excess. We might describe this as an extra-cinematic experience for the viewer, what Luce Irigaray describes as the *mucous* (of the body, of language), that which cannot be isolated as either interior or exterior, as subject or object, a fluid that exists between - the gap or third term between male and female in the sexual act, or, in this instance, what exists between film and viewer, and, moreover, what is between the film's material and its announcements. Lorraine describes mucous as a 'murky intermediary realm' where 'difference is acknowledged' (Lorraine 1999: 38<sup>6</sup>). This mucous is close to what Deleuze and Guattari term *virtual feminism*, and what Deleuze means by the interval - a plateau for the body doubled as both corporeal certainty and emergent borderless desire. A virtual feminism transgresses the limits of critique and the mental redundancy of binary opposition. It generates momentum towards new and novel ways of becoming a feminist, or, in other words, one who is always encountering and embodying difference. Its space is the *how* of how a subject desires, not what she or he desires - the doing of the desire within its very touch. For a moment then, let us explore the space (the state) of a gap in cinema in terms of the feminine. This gap is not psychosis or death or transcendence, but rather immanence. It suggests a shift in the cultural imaginary towards contingent and destratified films, and this is the objective of a cinema into the real, to bring out the feminine of the time-image. Around such a shift the

self is spilled into the real, it becomes with it, as a life, as that which is in excess of signification - a body that thinks, a sticky film that bleeds and makes touches.<sup>7</sup>

Perhaps we are passing through an era when time must redeploy space? [...] A remaking of immanence and transcendence, notably through this threshold that has never been examined as such: the female sex. The threshold that gives access to the mucous . . . a threshold that is always half-open. The threshold of the lips, which are strangers to dichotomy and oppositions. Gathered one against the other but without any possible suture, at least of a real kind.

(Irigaray 1993: 18)

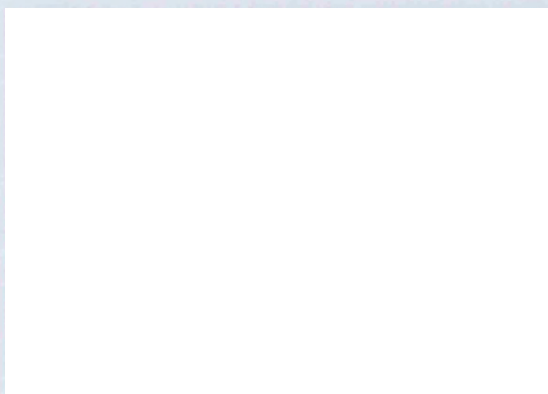
What Irigaray describes is the stranger within - a mobile, dancing imperceptibility by which we may brush up against our own limits.<sup>8</sup> What emerges from the situation of the feminine gap in cinema is a fluidity of language, of terms, of descriptions, of relations, and a desire for a becoming in space and time. This is the possibility of an *other* psychology in the cinema transaction, where the narrative binding that perpetuates coherent vision is torn up, and a mental image of disassociated duration and fluid identity becomes visible. This identity is excessive, because it remains open to the contingent forces that would otherwise be foreclosed. Some thirty years before Irigaray proposed a theory for corporeal language, or Deleuze delivered his philosophy for the organ-less body of (not yet) thought produced by a cinema spiritual automaton, Maya Deren called this 'vertical film,' or what she describes as the non-enchantment of the film body's desire for non-fixity. Deren's *Meshes of the Afternoon* (1943) and *Ritual in Transfigured Time* (1946) make of the moving image the dance of its own temporal properties. The labyrinths of *Meshes* are not only the product of a dream, or, if they are, it is not the dream of Deren's on-screen character but the dream of cinema, a dream that jousts with the woken world. *Meshes* and *Ritual* pirouette in a cyclical time and a circuit of expression that cannot be contained by the old system that would seek to move towards clarification before closure. In *Ritual*, the character steps into the social space of the party and with each movement of her body or the panning of the other dancing bodies she encounters the limitless possibility of her own position, in time. The film moves towards an endless loop, and is saved only by the termination of its cine-self, as an object with a fixed duration. Nonetheless, there has been the gesture of another space and time - a new and unknown



trajectory for the human, which is *a film*. Here, in film practice, is motion, momentum, alterity, a fracturing, a bursting; a whirling until matter is shattered. These are Luce Irigaray's words, siren calls for the radical transformation of language in all of its forms.<sup>9</sup> Arthur Kroker, writing of the deep affinity between the rhizome of Deleuze and Guattari and feminism, makes this point: 'The feminist subject, then, [is] an event-scene, living at the edge of the material body and virtual reality' (Arthur Kroker 1992<sup>10</sup>). It is precisely this - poetry - the wild and unformed vibrations of words and clusters of matter that are not required to convey meaning, that Deleuze looks for, and almost finds, in the time-image cinema. But Deleuze lacks adequate examples, and this is perhaps because he does not look to the practice of filmmaking. There is much still to be done to release images from fixity.

This film situation, between top-down and bottom-up oppositions, reveals how any discursive utterance, and particularly the discourse of classical cinema, is legible only through its attempts to disguise the form by which it is delivered. Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller's cinematic installation *The Berlin Files* (2003) is a looped film that purposefully never gains legibility. In one sequence a Steadicam shot glides through an empty apartment, peering into a room to catch sight of a pianist. This hyperbolic camera movement seems to run ahead of the sequence, to be too big for it. As though aware of the camera's stealth, a dramatic orchestrated score suddenly rises, but its refrain is the same as the pianist's melody, and he continues to play, only now in accompaniment to his own thriller scene. The shot sweeps away to find a more covert means of approaching the player, and, as it does so we see an intruder reflected in the piano's surface (like the momentary glimpse of a figure in the bathroom mirror in *Of Camera*). Something of great significance must be happening, but we have not been granted a proper view of events, and the score bursts from the screen as the image fades to black. Cardiff and Bures Miller are playing with an association of the cinematic, embodying the retrograde process of narrative comprehension. This is most apparent in the photographic slide show sequence, which re-presents key images from the installation loop as 'evidence,' but also shows us what we are already doing as viewers: trying

to make coherence from fragments. *The Berlin Files* hitchhikes on the back of cinema. In the repetitions of figures moving to and from camera - the figure in the snow, the woman in the subway, the waitress on the photographic slide, the karaoke singer - it shows to us the inherent repetition and symmetry of the cinematic form. When the shadow of an apparent audience member briefly brushes across the screen image, the viscosity of the cinematic membrane is touched. The audience turns their collective head to the back of the enclosed installation space, to find that the shadow was an image manipulation, and there is no physical body obstructing the projector lens. A part of the audience has become virtual and stepped, like a more enterprising Sherlock Jnr, into the sequence. We are discovering filmmaking is an operation that overwrites the lived world as it attempts to elucidate it. It disassembles as it creates.



*The Berlin Files*  
(Janet Cardiff & George Bures Miller 2003)

During the filming of David Lean's *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962) the crew on location in the desert was faced with the near impossible task of removing their footprints from the sand, their aim being, as Sobchack writes, 'to cover the film's perceptual tracks, to disguise the "extra-diegetic" situation of the narrator of the narrative, and so to transform an intentional and discursive *activity* (the viewing view) into the intended and produced *object* that is *histoire* (the viewed view)' (Sobchack 1992: 227). A film narrative is never without bleed; it cannot contain the entire rogue elements it seeks to order or repress. The footprints in the sand, the camera reflected in a mirror, or a car window - these are instances of the image as it exceeds and transcends material visibility and makes a feedback loop. Such images are

the film's nature *naturing* (Spinoza's *natura naturans*), the infinite substantive of the film, where there is confusion between verb and noun. Classical cinema has manufactured and maintained supremacy, and yet its intentional singularity - the 'Whole' of the film text - cannot be separated from the infinite intensity of the open set that it attempts to close or delimit. From the chemical noise on the surface of the celluloid, to the inaccuracies inherent in film telling (approximate continuities, approximate emotions, conceits of time, gestures and arrangements of space), from the variable performance of the film print and the environment of the auditorium, to the always shifting relationship between symbolism and realism, from the indelible fact of the film's making - indexed in the narrative through details such as haircuts and décor - to the dummy shots of arrival and departure in the documentary, examine any film closely and you will find approximation, compression, artifice and noise. There is no singular unitary Whole. There is, rather, the agglomeration of *good enough*, of *effective*.

In *Of Camera*, we are on a slide descending down a chute towards the other world, the film's body. We can think of the situation within *Of Camera* as the double-becoming of the film, in that two ontologies are emerging in tandem: the narrative is being negated by the appearance of distressed pictures which cause interruption, and yet the narrative also extends itself to occupy this distress, so that the not-story elements (the film image burning in the gate, videotape drop-out, colour saturation), *become* the story.<sup>11</sup> The two heterogenous realms (the discursive and the non-discursive) come into contact with one another, but instead of becoming synthesized or re-establishing dominant/subordinate relations, each realm encounters an indeterminate outside. New configurations of the articulable and the perceptible emerge. *Of Camera* describes a crisis - that of experiencing a tear in thought where characters do not jump across impossible continuities, but instead become swallowed-up in them. What the Woman sees and encounters is the interval between mobile sections (shots) in the moving image itself, where each edit is a distressing of the movement-image, of coherent, action-oriented film narrative space. She is one of Deleuze's pure seers, who exist in the interval of movement, where time is out of joint. It is not possible to hold on to her screen image as a

historically determined character, only as a life in the predicament of the state of change encountered as anxiety, approaching what Deleuze calls 'a whole new sense of subjectivity' (Deleuze 1989: 47<sup>12</sup>), the subjectivity of the gap.

*Of Camera* is a fiction that conveys an affect of temporal absence. The screen persona of the Woman isn't actually experiencing anything, because she is simply a construction, a piece in an artifice chain, the forcing of a narrative identity from a conceit that is an impossibility: a thought a filmmaker had of a film in which a character only exists on videotape. The performer can only offer the appearance of a crisis in thought and a slippage into the between of self as mediation; her sensorimotor collapse is still at a safe distance from any somatic, sentient person: a film character cannot think or feel the media they are imbedded within. What Deleuze calls 'intercessors' (Deleuze 1989: 222) leap into existence in the gap between the actuality of the shoot, the properties of the media, and the narrative as it is being told. It is these intercessors that suggest new and novel paths for the narrative form, because they are not fully contained by it. Their behaviour is not polite. *Of Camera* utilizes discontinuity in order to make alien the character (the player) within the events, to make her both the rendering of some present/absent other (the mediator, the author) and the transgressor of this other. Hers is a willful, dissolved identity that refuses to fall on one side or the other of the binary distinction of protagonist/performer, story/format. She falls into the gaps ordinarily bridged by impossible continuities, but she also experiments with them, lives them, enters them with curiosity. Her hand transgresses the frame, making bodily contact with the 'something else', or the 'other' of the film itself, its surplus.<sup>13</sup> The edge of the frame and the edit become diegetically felt forces acted upon the body of the film and the body of the protagonist, rather than agents of cohesion. The Woman is match-cut from one room to the next; her hand reaches across the interval; the Man is somehow transported between rooms, and finally is "cut" from the film altogether. The edit is as much a character as the Man or the Woman. At times it is still a unifying and calming presence, at others it brings about disjuncture and division. When the cut is a division, 'either/or' dialectics are replaced by the



limitless and excessive possibilities of 'and, and, and,' when what comes next finds its basis in the divorce from what came before.



*Of Camera.* Following shot.

Preceding shot.

It is not a matter of following a chain of images, even across voids, but of getting out of the chain or the association. Film ceases to be 'images in a chain... an uninterrupted chain of images each one the slave of the next,' and whose slave we are... It is the method of BETWEEN, 'between two images,' which does away with all cinema of the One. It is the method of AND, 'this and then that,' which does away with all the cinema of Being=is.

(Deleuze 1989: 180)

What emerges when the edit consists of *and* followed by *and*, rather than either/or dichotomies? In the Mobil petrol station section of *Two or Three Things I Know About Her* (Jean-Luc Godard 1966), Juliette visits her husband's garage in her red mini. We are presented with a number of versions of this occurrence, just as we have previously been presented with a number of versions of the character of Juliette. The red car toot toots its arrival, is turned and cleaned in a rapid succession of minor variants. Why show the garage and the characters, and not the trees in the background, Godard ponders, making choice a formal element in his film's construction, putting thoughts concerning the film into the film, as a creative problem.<sup>14</sup> There are two or three things I know about Godard's ideas of montage: that film inevitably uses interstices of framing and editing, and therefore must ponder these methods whilst simultaneously using them; that the lexicon of cinema therefore can and must only appear as the text-like apparatus of its own form, in its own texts; that, in

Godard, the continuity of the past no longer gives meaning to the present. 'Given one image,' Deleuze writes, 'another image has to be chosen which will induce an interstice between the two. This is not an operation of association, but of differentiation' (Deleuze 1989: 179-180<sup>15</sup>). A sequence edited on the basis of and-and-and, rather than either/or, unleashes a distribution of intensities and the possibility for the new; the irrational edit is neither purposeful nor arbitrary, it gives privilege to the in-between rather than to discrete sections that form links in a chain.

Thus modern cinema develops new relations with thought from three points of view: the obliteration of a whole or of a totalization of images, in favour of an outside which is inserted between them; the erasure of the internal monologue as whole of the film in favour of a free indirect discourse and vision; the erasure of the unity of man and the world, in favour of a break which now leaves us with only a belief in this world. (Deleuze 1989: 187-188)

Not before *or* after then, not subject *or* object, but intensities, middle terms, irrational junctures: ands, ands, ands. This form of cinema is precisely interstitial: the Whole becomes the *and*, the very gap; it is not the absolute, out there, but rather the passage from one antinomy to another antinomy. There is no more out-of-field, because the irrational interval has brought about a dispersal of the outside. The inside and the outside have revealed themselves as not separate from one another; the outside of the image has been replaced by the interstice between the two frames. Deleuze writes, 'The cut or interstice is no longer a part of the preceding or following image (the two series), it is an element in itself' (Deleuze. 1989: 215), in rebellion against what Arthur Kroker calls 'its own reterritorializing codes of space-binding' (Kroker 1992<sup>16</sup>).

Peter Tscherkassky's *Outer Space* (1999) and *Instructions for a Light and Sound Machine* (2005) emerge for the viewer as though the film is being projected as the celluloid is simultaneously dipped into and processed in a deep chemical bath. The film *is* the subject, staring into the dazzling white light of its own completion to a visible image on the screen, the death throes and birth cries of film as an art medium, its life realized at the moment of its

death. In *Instructions*, Tscherkassky fires *The Good, the Bad and The Ugly* (Sergio Leone 1966) from a canon, and, like the bridge in the famous western, it explodes, between the viewer and the screen, as we are contemplating scrambling across it. These iconic celluloid sequences, now found footage, give in to an exhaustive physical manipulation (the result of months of effort in a dark room, optically re-printing and isolating areas of the frame with a laser pointer). These are physical wounds. Eli Wallach is made to face the firing squad again and again, to hang from the cinema's noose. Structural film is made over as a raft riding highly controlled but nonetheless exhilarating rapids, the distress *effect*, its precious appearance: the old-guard avant-garde, walking on a velvet red carpet, sensation and narrative reclaimed. We might ask, does this make Tscherkassky's polished, next-generation structuralism constitute an aberrant-image or an action-image? There is no traditional narrative, although screening notes for *Instructions* refer to a purgatorial journey down into an inferno through the nine hellish levels, or lives, of the cinematic operation.<sup>17</sup> The movements presented (mechanical grinding, chemical spill, action oblivion) are nonetheless character driven, the expressions of the very matter of the cinema.

In *Outer Space*, there is the doubling of abuse, where one abuse negates and destroys the other. Barbara Hershey's character in *The Entity* (Ron Silver 1981) is repeatedly raped by a poltergeist that has no visual appearance, leaving space for the deplorable misogyny of the director's eye to scrutinize the unobstructed violated body. In *Outer Space* it is the film *The Entity* that is raped and taken through ordeal after ordeal, by the invisible presence and force of Tscherkassky. The gaze has had its eyes ripped out; rigidity is given a fluid state. The affection-images of Hershey and Wallach's faces oscillate between fight and flight in their own palpable universe, the edit. They wrestle like antimatter with their counterparts, the famous ones, who are the screen faces of another realm. The narrative component of each feature film has been entirely removed. All that is left are the movements in time of the cinema world, movements that are nonetheless dynamic, dangerous and action-packed.





*Outer Space* (Peter Tscherkassky 1999)

And so, rather than extending movement by creating its likeness, the time-image foregrounds cinema as artifice, providing pure optical and sound images which are self-evidently descriptions of the thing rather than mere indexes or registers of it.<sup>18</sup> This kind of cinema can only signify itself, its virtual sensibility and its physical impossibility. In spite of its appearances, it is not the lived world, but it is also not a syntactical text. The irrational edit of the time-image constitutes a vibration between intention and contingency, making an image Markov chain that is not random but rather a semi-accidental phenomenon, a mixture of uncertainty and dependency, for the image is still partially dependent on the form of classical cinema as the place from which to jump. In an irrational cut there is no stable association through metaphor or metonymy. There is, rather, a re-linkage of independent images. Not one image after the other but one image *plus* another, which is Godard's interstitial method, a method that gives proliferation to the creative problem of what Deleuze and Guattari term *choosing to choose*,<sup>19</sup> which, in the cinematic sense, means to choose an image, one image, any image, to follow another. Godard shows Deleuze a montage which interlaces an arbitrary before and after into a becoming. Of course, the organization of shot to shot cannot vary in the completed arrangement of the finished film because of the film object (the tape or print<sup>20</sup>), but the object can perform differently, and so too can our attitude to it, given the space of vibration made possible by irrational intervals. Difference is precisely the viewer's renewable entrance into the gaps and durations of the not-rational film sequence. To choose to choose is to choose to have thoughts differently, to fluidly invite into being, or



cause into being, the not-yet-thought in the place of the habitual. Choice is deeper than any link in the world. To choose to choose. To choose to film.<sup>21</sup>

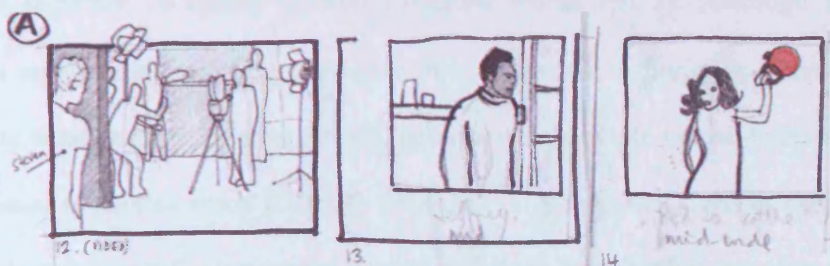


I am still editing a film as I write. *Like a House on Fire* (2006) is one in a series of invented cinematic Tarot cards, a deck that deals out a cluster of utterances, each indirectly pointing to the next and to the arbitrariness of what has come before and what will follow. Characters in the film read the cards but the cards cannot offer any reading of the film. The cards are like Borges' apocryphal *Chinese Encyclopedia*,<sup>22</sup> storyboards for the film we are watching that mock any attempt at film to be a language or functional sign system, and, moreover, mock the ubiquity of signs and the expectation of meaning within society and culture in general. Each card points nowhere in particular; each is a signifier without fixed signification. There is a filmmaker trying to write a film, but the house in which he writes is cohabited by the film's crew, cast and the characters they are playing. Everyone is banging around, trying to get into various rooms, or waiting for the film and its story to happen. This is not a story however, but rather a fumbling with the language of cinematic telling, a sequential turning of cards akin to a game of *Cluedo*<sup>23</sup> in which the envelope is finally opened to reveal that the revolver has murdered the ballroom using a Colonel Mustard. In *Like a House on Fire*, the normative, top-down vernacular of classic cinema and the bottom-up, localized film speech act form a combined utterance, where commonly they would be segregated. The situation of the film's making and the situation of the film made cause

difficulties for one another, and yet, like shuffled cards, maintain a unity in disunity, through irrational compilation. The filmmaker, his subject, the bodies of the cast and crew, and the space of the location, become confused, so that the film's centre is shattered from the inside: a film house, a straight house, a crooked house, a character becoming house ('In this card he is the house'), a house on fire, a house collapsed. Where the house was, he is the film.

One of the performers, JEFFREY, comments (His back to camera), 'Don't you think it's strange that films get written by writers? They get written on laptops, in coffee shops, in studios, in bars. They get written in rooms. And films are rooms. But a film can go anywhere it wants to...' Where are the rooms in relation to one another, and who are the characters in relation to one another? They are one and the same, determined by equal edit motivations. The film has lost its inside and outside, the one devours the other in a continual re-ordering of diegetic and spatial order, so much so that often point-of-view shots are wrongly located, pre-filmic sounds complicate non-correspondent pro-filmic spaces, conversations bridge locations, and sequences resist the cut as a determined parameter of events.<sup>24</sup> *Like a House on Fire* offers no 'prior' by which the viewer might determine the characters, and no reliable sense of 'what will happen next' that the viewer can rest their association on. The extra-diegetic act of the edit, and the pro-theatrical occurrence of the edit, are ontological devices, much in the way that they had been in *Of Camera*, only now *interstices proliferate everywhere*.<sup>25</sup> Camera jerks collide with characters falling over or looking away, and, in turn, seem to butt into attributes rendered in post-production, so that the structure of the Whole collapses, like a house of cards. We hear bumping, crashing and surplus sounds and these attitudes have the effect of placing the film in the present tense of its own event as conveyer of sensations. But the only thing being signified is *the film*, and by this I mean not merely its properties (which is the ideology of structural-materialism) but signification of the category of the cinema as a signifying agency. Because the film cannot be made sense of, the sense for the viewer becomes that of 'I cannot make this into sense'. She or he remains held at the



[illegible]

Deleuze observes that 'It is characteristic of cinema to reflect itself' (Deleuze 1989: 186). The reflexivity at work in *Like a House on Fire* makes the differences between the film space and the lived world apparent. The film assaults the building blocks of classical cinema, continually re-arranging itself and beginning again. The acting is uncharismatic and each scene falls flat. The director who is also the writer and the editor is *in* the film. The characters appear as though waiting for the narrative to pick up momentum and give them actions that will convey them through the film's duration. These protagonists are not heroes or villains, and neither are they 'like us.' Instead they are intermediaries, potentialities - conduits without proper current to conduct. The situation of the writer becomes the situation of the written, as the filmmaker, preparing a text which will serve as the template for the film he will make, is disturbed, first by the appearance of a film crew and cast, and secondly by the appearance of the characters the cast are playing. Here we have an initial disruption, recognizable to all as the writer confronted by the written, but one that does not create action, for there is no ensuing *logic of transformations* (Branigan 1992). The predicament of trying to write a film (something which is inherently un-cinematic) is supplanted by the predicament of being co-opted into the film concurrently being written.

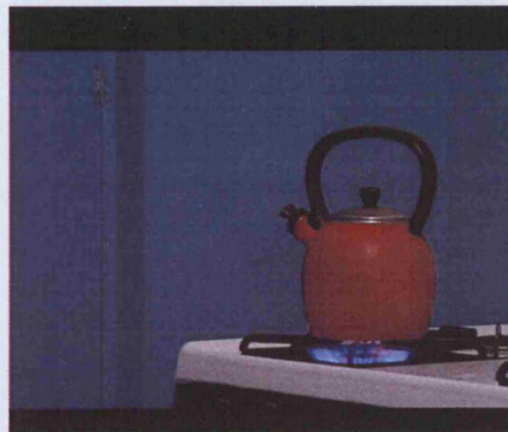
Artaud believed that what the cinema needed was 'indecipherable signs and unfinished puzzles.' He remarked of the *The Shell and the Clergyman* (Dulac 1928) that it '[...] does not tell a story but develops a series of states of mind which are derived from one another just as one thought is derived from another without this thought reproducing the reasonable sequence of events' (Artaud *Collected Works Vol 3*). Although the narrator element is omnipresent in *Like a House on Fire*, it has lost authority and been effectively replaced by what Deleuze, quoting Artaud, describes as, 'multiple voices, internal dialogues, always a voice in another voice' (Deleuze 1989: 167<sup>27</sup>). A character, Chris, is delivered to the audience as an historically determined subject, collected from his house and brought to the domain of the dramatic by two mumbling members of the crew, in what appears to be a factually unfolding event. Chris bears a likeness to a tarot card depicting a man who has fallen

and clutches hold of a door, and frequently during the film Chris does fall to the floor and grasp at whatever is around him. Chris the factual person becomes Chris cast as persona into a faltering drama, who in turn becomes a body (what Bresson called a 'model'<sup>28</sup>) performing like-behaviour to the filmmaker. 'Can you turn the lights on,' is the repeated refrain of this character, caught in an optical drama, only in the dark (the origin of this remark is a panic attack I encountered during the night<sup>29</sup>). He does not seem to know why he is there, and, for that matter, where 'there' is. The viewer cannot fully conceive of the film's spatiality, territory, or intent. Even the author stumbles, clueless, upon scenes of what must have been his own making. The audience passes through an array of associative spaces, the waste products, perhaps, of another film, a legible film, where three characters have good reason to be together looking at cards, in a living room, in a bar. These images might be leftovers, a 'bubble-and-squeak' film made of scraps from a previous and more sumptuous meal.<sup>30</sup> The audience is thus encouraged to give up on accessing narrative meaning by way of the film's conflicting motifs, and instead allow the film's formal repetitions to act upon them and for their own difference to act upon the film.

This is the means by which Alain Robbe-Grillet suggested viewers engage with the crystalline structure of *Last Year at Marienbad*. Robbe-Grillet states that 'Two attitudes are then possible: either the spectator will try to constitute some "Cartesian" schema – the most linear, the most rational he can devise [...] or else the spectator will let himself be carried along by the extraordinary images in front of him [...] and to this spectator the film will seem the "easiest" he has ever seen: a film addressed exclusively to his sensibility, to his faculties of sight, hearing, feeling' (Alain Robbe-Grillet 1962<sup>31</sup>). Such impossibility made possible by the interval is often recuperated by the viewer and made into a sensible form, for example, the form of analogy. Many people who watch *Of Camera* and *Like a House on Fire* rationalize the various sequences as being representative of psychological states: the man's scratched appearance must symbolize his weariness in the relationship; the woman's jittery form must represent her anxiety, and only that.<sup>32</sup>



Deleuze is quite emphatic that instances of time-images in films are not analogous to anything (other than themselves) but rather have signifying value from a place of what Charles Peirce called *firstness*.<sup>33</sup> Borrowing this sign system from Peirce, Deleuze proposes that Peircean *thirdness* is the standard sign used by the cinema: the realm of symbolization that involves meaning and interpretation. Deleuze renames this sign the *legisign* (also known as the *relation-image*).<sup>34</sup> Deleuze terms secondness the *sinsign*, that which possesses an index or attribute of its source. Secondness is where, according to Peirce, the actual emerges from the virtual, the perceiver or thinking subject undergoes 'opposition and struggle for the sign' (Marks 2002<sup>35</sup>) and begins to make differentiations in terms of action-reaction, deciding upon the *this* and *not that* of the image based upon the qualitative attributes of an object or event. Secondness is a perception that leads to action. 'Red' may be a colour field, but 'steam,' or 'burn,' is an attribute of something that is red hot, an actual event. Thirdness mediates firstness and secondness.



*Like a House on Fire* is a deliberate perversion of sign systems, from first to third order (for example, the opening blue colour plane is abstract but becomes identifiable as possibly a blue screen, and later as actually the backing to the tarot cards). Red signifies danger but also red herring. A steaming Red Tea Kettle, such as the supporting player in *Like a House on Fire* (above) has the *sinsign* or secondness indexical value of danger (scalding) but also the *legisign* of a cultural event, conveying that water is ready to make tea. However, when viewed repetitively, and in a number of contexts where it does not complete itself as *sinsign* or *legisign*, the red kettle manifests as merely an image, one that has no symbolic value (literally a red herring, then). When secondness does not provoke a movement in response to movement, it remains suspended within thought as *affect* (firstness); and when secondness reconstitutes the whole of movement with respect to all aspects of the interval of thought it becomes relational (thirdness). In Deleuze, these sign-types correspond to the *affection-image*, the *action-image*, and the *relation-image*. The cinema has tried to replicate and reinforce the dominant convention of thirdness by approximating syntax in its mode of address and patterns of form, downplaying its propensity for abstraction and the very corporeality of its function. The fluid and irrational cinema to which we are giving our attention concentrates on perpetual firstness, on the very utterable of the moving image, its chiasmic expulsion, rather than on what is being uttered. In Irigaray's terms, this would be the 'not-that' of the image.

Within every classical film there is another film. Sometimes this film within a film is implicit; at other times it is explicit. Wherever and whatever I film, I first encounter myself as a person who is filming. This excess of the image (what is behind the image, after the image) constitutes its own text, what Deleuze calls *dysnarrative*, that which creates a rift between narration and practical reality.<sup>36</sup> Such a form of what the Russian Formalists called 'literariness' inheres in the form of the text, through its characteristic way of using style and convention, often reflexively.<sup>37</sup> In fact, any instance of reflexivity acts as a critique of film production, for through citation a film makes parody, thereby emptying the cinema narrative

of its diegetic power. Deleuze writes that 'the film within the film does not signal an end of history, and is no more self-sufficient than is the flashback or the dream: it is just a method of working, which must be justified from elsewhere. In fact, it is a mode of the crystal-image' (Deleuze 1989: 76-77<sup>38</sup>). The film about the film lets loose the nature of the film *naturing*. As we have established, classic cinema narrative exists and functions precisely because of such hidden processes and is an explicit attempt to master them (Branigan 1992: 10), but this regulation can itself run into loss (especially given the edit process).

Robbe-Grillet's theory offers the viewer respite from the impulse to see film images as legisigns or sinsigns and therefore to have to read them. But the viewer's impulse to read and recuperate is nonetheless extremely useful, as a property that can be implicated in the ensemble of the film's operation. This reaching for sense operates as an additional attribute to any film text, like an extra transition, or a peculiar interval of its own. *Like a House on Fire* is comparable to an overheard conversation where only parts of sentences are audible. It has the appearance of a film drama that might add up, if only all of its components were available. But in its current formation its meaning remains obscured, incomplete. Signs present themselves and represent themselves, but there is limited information and time for these signs to become structured, to be co-opted into a sensible system, before they are updated and changed. The images are only *like* symbols and therefore cannot be deciphered. *Like a House on Fire* makes an announcement: the moving image as anxiety, as malady, as gap.

So too does Gary Hill's *Incidence of Catastrophe* (1987-88), where the act of reading the written word is a sickness, a madness between the 'read' and the 'lived.' Hill uses the physicality of the (video) interval and image superimposition to embody Maurice Blanchot's *Thomas the Obscure* (1941). Characters around a dining table utter words that cause, or are timed with, cut-aways and in-frame occurrence; the turning of a page becomes commensurate with the 'fold' of the video edit. The pages are wiped into and over images of fluidity: a tidal pulling, collapsing mud banks, the mass of a liquid, the flow of written words, the page as a



waveform. The edit crashes against the shore, opening and closing the conception of book and of legibility, making the book, and the videotape, as much object as text. Videotape folds into itself; interpretation and representation are afflictions. Through experiencing the word as nausea inducing, we encounter the video artist as reader, as Hill attempts to 'try out' reading and 'try out' video making. It is as though we have momentarily penetrated Hill's own thinking body.

The viewer and character can also, and at once, be reader, watcher and co-author, and to a great extent the author, when in the inter-text between intention and contingency, is also the reader of what exceeds his or her invention.<sup>39</sup> This is why the moving image is foremost a *lectosign*. It must be read as well as seen, although it can never in and of itself, as an independent image, be meaningful; we do *read* the moving image, although it is not actually readable without the imposition of our own pre-determined texts. The activity of both reading and watching a moving image involve oneiric figurations and the balance of various mental images (for example, during film watching there is the balance of light cast upon a screen, diegetic story space, memory images, which might be recollections of what we have seen of the film, or memories in general, plus speculative images of a future-present, which might be the future present of the film, or one unrelated to the film). Cinema deploys the oneiric figuration of film interlaced with mind, and within its own text, balances the invented with the actual; the dreamt with the sentient; the top-down with bottom-up. In classical cinema, these Saussurean binary oppositions privilege the first term over the second, so that the viewer is largely non-participatory. Films that are fluid and uncertain in their arrangement do not operate within these binary oppositions but rather involve their co-existence. They do not produce consumption or engender meaning. The discontinuous time and the forms of reflexivity excreted in *Like a House on Fire* and *Incidence of Catastrophe* constitutes a textual immanence, where inter-textual articulations (book-videotape; script-scene) mean that story is erased as it is being written, *sous rature*, as Derrida has it, and the maker is revealed wherever the text tries to conceal them, in a mutual reversibility of body and language in a

lived world which, without language, is strange. As Paul Ricoeur writes, 'our movement up the entropic slope of language encounters the movement by which we come back this side of the distinctions between actuality, action, production, motion' (Ricoeur 1977: 309<sup>40</sup>).

*Like a House on Fire* delivers the cinematic without what such a semaphore articulates and holds up: the narrative. Here is the moving image as a tool, albeit still crude, for experiential and cognitive *écriture*. And then there is the cinematic without the cinema altogether, *the filmic without the film*, which I will come to. Uncertain films such as this elicit a tension, a crisis of confidence in the audience, one that is different to the distracted inattention within the structural-materialist film's reception, because the images are not abstract and appear to be like dramatic ones. *Like a House on Fire* is dependent on the narrative search engines in our minds for its completion (or incompleteness). What I mean by this is that I am principally interested in the

Mental state  
(or even the emotional state)  
where a person is oscillating between the sensible and the irrational. Without narrative-like elements, it is less possible to explore this state. I like to give the impression of narrative coherence being just around the corner, although every corner turned offers another corner.

Gilberto Perez  
(Film in Review: *The Edges of Realism* 1997: 175-176)  
The point is not merely to tell us the story but to make us aware of our path to the story.

During this thwarting of expectation for story (within this repetition of nearly-story), the audience either becomes irritated, or switches to a different access point to the flow of images in sequence. In this sense, narrative is a uniquely experimental form. And besides, to craft stories well is to be inert, and I have never taught myself to do this. However, the building blocks I use are extremely similar to that of the classical film drama. To repeat, I use actors, scripts, suggestive scores, motifs, in fact almost all of the tropes and vernacular of classical cinema, but aberrantly. What I most want to do with cinema is doubly impossible. Firstly, because I want to make films that provoke my own thoughts to become distended and

new, but of course, as the author, I know every detail of my own finished films too well for that to be possible. Secondly, I desire for the cinema as gap to have such potency that it changes the physical limitations of the medium, so that frames collapse and the film spills out into the world, where it becomes a life. This is only possible in thought. I can think this kind of a film, but in the physical world I can only make assertions towards it.

Narrative, we know, is a many thousands of years old system for managing sense data and the virtual images of memory and imagination. It makes catalogues and arranges events into teleology. This is all fine, and any audience member is supremely skilled in extracting meaning from disparate events and signs. The key thing is giving the audience the confidence (in the author, in the film) to remain in the state of extracting, of mining, rather than hurry to the dead conclusion of whether the film does or does not make sense, and whether it does or does not entertain. I have found that people appreciate my films much more when they view them a second time. Then they bring to the assemblage the repetition of viewings and their own difference, and they encounter the pictures inventively with that difference in repetition.

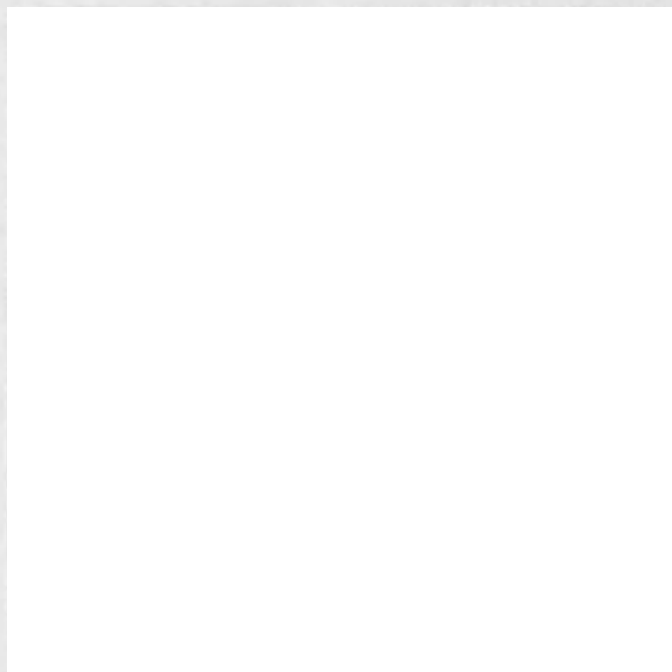
Difference makes each cut emerge as simultaneously planned and arbitrary. When people view *Like a House on Fire* and *Of Camera* a second time, they adjust to the films' irregular nature, but they also retain from the first viewing the sense-making thoughts they had. This interlacing of thoughts and associations acts as an additional text applied to the on-screen sequences. There is repetition of form applied in the same way as a classical drama, in that we see a red tea kettle as instrument, as weapon, we see blue-screen blue as mise-en-scène decor and as psychology ('I was daydreaming'); Chris continually falls over, in different environments, but none of these repetitions constitutes a meaning that the audience can carry with them. Each revisiting of a sign provokes the fact of difference within repetition, the return to the same as difference. Chris arrives again, once more, in the bar (the *beginning again* of *Like a House on Fire* two thirds of the way through the film's length) establishing the film's entry into another series. A sequence of shots follows, linked on the basis of

movements in frame. This series *berserks* movement-image rationality. The sequence is further interrupted by free indirect passages of movement without the motivation of direction further interrupt: Chris looking, Jeffrey looking, Megan's head turning suddenly to one side, Megan's hands on the pages of a book. These are unintended moments when the director of photography ran the camera without looking through the viewfinder or informing any of the cast. The film trips over its own virtual body (as an edited temporality), presenting the lived world as a series of fallings over, like Jacques Tati's *Playtime* (1967), its cinematic movements as 'busk', as a dance becoming, no longer narrative but a symmetry of inter-flowing incident phases, palimpsests of coincidence, decaying in detail as the next overlaps and replaces the last, what Deleuze describes as 'a rolling ball of the present, from where we cannot speculate or retrospect' (Deleuze 1989: 67).

*Like a House on Fire* is a film dropped down a flight of stairs. The tarot cards parody the categories of chance and interpretation. The edit decisions are not aleatory; they are the result of percept thoughts in the situation of the edit, the 'trying out' of one shot to another. This tumbling is unavoidably over determined, simply by the highly controlled act of technically performing edits, but nonetheless, a register of the edit, as a thought, remains. One would have to either be a total novice or a supremely skilled editor to have complete mastery over the edit itself, because an edit is an outcome determined by its own format and by the model of its cultural iteration. This model seeks equilibrium and defaults to providing pleasurable and safe passage for the viewer, even when dealing with shocking content. Perhaps it is the case that there is no such thing as an irrational edit in the mind of the editor, although the apparent irrationality of combinatory shots can make a mental site for new thought in the viewer. Whose mind does the film or video editor imagine perceiving the edited film? Is it an every-mind, and does the editor make decisions based on what that every-mind can possibly know and will emotionally react to? When I edit, I essentially assemble the film my own mind wants to perceive. My point here is that an irrational idea that suggests a non-rational edit is not the same as the idea in the mind of the viewer that watches that edit. I

think this is why I can only say with certainty that I make films for myself. I could not possibly think the thoughts that a person other than me might have in reaction to the actions I perform in response to my own thoughts. I try to retain my process and thinking as implicit rather than implicit within the exhibited films, and although this thinking is not explicit in the final film, it is never fully overwritten by explanatory material.

*I Make Things Happen, The End, Chris Crossing, Of Camera, and Like a House on Fire* create interferences. Their reflexivity offers a trick surrogacy, where the film about a film becomes a subject that can never adequately resolve, because it cannot be completed satisfactorily. For, at some point, the film within the film must run up against the film it is in. But reflexivity turns bodies inside out: film bodies, filmed bodies, thinking viewing bodies. It disassembles the arrangement of looks, altering the presence and look of the spectator, so that there is no stable subject on camera or in the viewing place of the theatre. As Sobchack describes, such reflexivity expresses how a person can in one instance be performer *and* performed; that a film can be telling *and* told, story world *and* material. And from this reflexivity the lived world is reproduced as an unsolvable conundrum and the cinema a liquid kind of architecture.



*Relativity* (M.C. Escher 1953)

If the normative value of cinema is the self as house, its posturing of unequivocal language is an agoraphobia. The cinema house is a spy place, a vantage point - the masculine. Avant-garde film and structural-materialist film have eschewed the structure of a house entirely, in favour of noise. Fluid film uses the house in order to explore the edges of its possibility: the shifting walls and Möbius strip architecture (like the impossible structures in the work of M.C. Escher), the utterance and the exploration of elastic space and unregulated time. I am uncomfortable fully ascribing this sensibility to the feminine. We lack the terms. But the cinema, in all of its operations: writing, rehearsal, production, levels of narration, edited spaces, and audience reception, is a difficulty. In *Of Camera* and *Like a House on Fire* the condition of the character is the film itself; we witness characters that cannot be characters. They push against the limit of cinema in a cine situation that eats its own tale. Their activities are not commensurable with the lived world precisely because they were not invented for it. With this idea we are drawing closer to a cinema that can manage an inventive form of absence. The 'like' in *Like A House On Fire* is the arrangement of rooms - a house - set fire to, a film's life-likeness burned. The image of a house does not signify 'house,' but 'Here is a house,' the index of actualization, as it occurs, in a film. The objective is to find new forms of identity rather than negate identity altogether. In terms of the cinema, it is to discover new forms of narrative, rather than abandon narrative with the attitude that no story can be emergent. In Deleuze's philosophy *the self* is replaced by *a life*. If we develop this thought, the film object (as subject) is increasingly intermixed with its life as a process (filmmaking). The film house is replaced by movements through and around it, or by the activity of disassembling and reconstructing it.



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<sup>1</sup> Deleuze writes that '[...] Bergson constantly circles around the following conclusion, which will also haunt cinema: attentive recognition informs us to a much greater degree when it fails than when it succeeds' (Deleuze. 1989: 54-55)

<sup>2</sup> Artaud 1976: 570-571.

<sup>3</sup> In *Of Camera*, my original plan was to heavily rehearse the male actor who played the male character and have the actress literally brought into the location to react, without the benefit of briefing, to the activities around her during the shoot. The only vestige of that process is the end credit sequence, in which we can hear her exclaim and groan. These are the exasperated noises Sharon Smith made following the word, 'Cut!' I returned to this sudden shift in behaviour around the foreclosure of a take in *The Film* and *The Film We Didn't Make*.

<sup>4</sup> Stephen Heath writes on this matter, that, 'If the fiction film works to produce a homogeneity, works to flatten out contradiction, that homogeneity is only ever the product of the film; in no way can it exhaust the textual system – the filmic process, the relational movement – which is precisely the term of its production' (Heath 1981: 133).

<sup>5</sup> A 'synecdoche' is closely related to metonymy and to metaphor. The use of synecdoche is a common way to emphasize an important aspect of a fictional character; for example, a character might be consistently described by a single body part which comes to represent the character, for example, 'mouths to feed' for hungry people. (Source, Wikipedia). I have applied this idea of synecdoche to classical cinema, whose evolution runs concurrently to the development of Saussure and also of Merleau Ponty and Sartre's theories. As Sobchack writes, 'Existential and semiotic phenomenology suggests that "coding" and containing the body's excessive, mobile, and "wild" signification is a cultural and historical activity that stakes out upon the body's broader meaning-producing field a limited and mutable circumscription of existence' (Sobchack 1992: 144).

<sup>6</sup> In fact, the very power of mucous is to spill thought into the body and the body into thought, and both body and thought into the world. Mucous is Irigaray's term for the unthought moving toward representation, for those strangely uncanny aspects of experience that defy already established self/other and body/mind divisions (see Whitford 1991a, 163). Tamsin Lorraine writes that 'The desire of a "masculine" economy of language fails to reflect adequately the porous nature of the body... it ignores the murky intermediary realm in which desires are not clearly laid out or articulated' (Lorraine 1999: 37).

<sup>7</sup> Introducing fluidity into language and identity relations sparks warnings of post structural freefall from a number of theorists. Riley Olstead suggests that (un)meaning (i.e., the freeplay of signs in postmodernity), can be regarded as the ultimate effect of alienation, and in fact an attitude manufactured by the dominant order and cultivated as a positivity where it is in fact a dangerous rather than transformative absence. Olstead sees perpetual self-negation, the project, if you will, of Deleuze and Guattari and of post-structuralism in general, as the paralysis of the modern thinking subject. As Lorraine writes, Irigaray, too 'criticizes philosophers who take an interest in the "deconstruction of ontology" without concerning themselves with "the constitution of a new, rationally founded

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identity' (Lorraine 1999: 218, quoting Irigaray in, *Thinking the Difference: For a Peaceful Revolution* 1994b: 32).

Lorraine continues: 'For Irigaray, subjectivity must be premised on a felt encounter with our own corporeal limits and an acknowledgment of the difference of the other who allows us to experience our limits' (Lorraine 1999: 220).

<sup>8</sup> Tamsin Lorraine notes that 'The excessive, unrepresentable feminine cannot be contained within current systems of representation. If Irigaray evokes such a feminine, she can do so strategically only by articulating the blind spot that is required for the phallogocentric economy to function in a specific context. This means that this notion of the feminine (if indeed we can call it a notion) is always in movement' (Lorraine 1999: 41.)

<sup>9</sup> See Tamsin Lorraine 1999: 64-65 on Irigaray's use of fluid language.

<sup>10</sup> Arthur Kroker, *Two meditations*, CTheory. originally published in Arthur Kroker, *The Possessed Individual*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992).

<sup>11</sup> *Becoming* is a term used by Deleuze (and Guattari) for the emergent movement of *a life* along the plane of immanence, as it opens onto the new. This concept is central to Deleuze's process philosophy, which reverses the trend of a timeless metaphysical reality in philosophy sustained since Plato. 'Becoming' is favoured over 'Being' and 'Non-being.' Becoming does not characterize change as illusory but as the cornerstone of metaphysical reality.

<sup>12</sup> 'Subjectivity, then, takes on a new sense, which is no longer motor or material, but temporal and spiritual: that which 'is added' to matter, not what distends it; recollection-image, not movement-image' (Deleuze 1989: 47). See also Bergson (1911) *Matter and Memory*: 69-77.

<sup>13</sup> Heath writes that 'The something else, the other film of which this film says everywhere the slips and slides: the narrative of the film and the history of that narrative, the economy of its narrative production, its logic. To approach, to experience the textual system can only be to pull the film onto this double scene, this process of its order and of the material that order contains, of the narrative produced and of the terms of its production. Analysis must come to deal with this work of the film, in which it is, exactly, the death - itself the disturbance - of any given cinema' (Heath 1981:143)

<sup>14</sup> Godard here offers up to the audience something of a cognitive shift, in which the thought processes of the artist become a part of the dramatization. The film then is the analysis of its own structure.

<sup>15</sup> Deleuze writes that 'Given one image, another image has to be chosen which will induce an interstice between the two. This is not an operation of association, but of differentiation, as mathematicians say, or of disappearance, as physicists say: given one potential, another has to be chosen, not any whatever, but in such a way that a difference of potential is established between the two, which will be productive of a third or of something new' (Deleuze 1989: 179-180). He continues: 'The Whole undergoes a mutation, because it has ceased to be the one-Being, in order to become the constitutive 'and' of things [...] The cuts or breaks in cinema have always formed the power of the continuous ' (Deleuze 1989: 180-181).



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<sup>16</sup> See on-line journal, *CTheory*, Arthur Kroker, originally published in Arthur Kroker, *The Possessed Individual*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992).

<sup>17</sup> See, [www.sixpackfilm.com](http://www.sixpackfilm.com).

<sup>18</sup> Deleuze writes that 'In the first case, we had, we perceived, a sensory-motor image from the thing. In the other case, we constitute a pure optical (and sound) image of the thing, we make a description' (Deleuze 1989: 44). This is why Robbe-Grillet, who wrote the screenplay for *Marienbad*, stated that the chronosign (Deleuze: 1989) of the pure optical image seems poorer, because it is not the thing but a description of it, a substitute for the thing, which in replacing the real, makes the referent disappear and in its place creates antinomy. The film antinomy is celluloid and sign.

<sup>19</sup> See Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Schizophrenia and Capitalism* 1987.

<sup>20</sup> There have been manifold attempts at database narrative engines, choose-your-own-adventure styled "random" narratives, none of which, at root, have managed to produce arbitrary or entirely self-generating story forms, in fact, quite the opposite, have relied heavily on existing codes, particularly in the role playing computer games typified by *Tomb Raider*.

<sup>21</sup> This is the basis of Deleuze and Guattari's *Difference and Repetition*, and what Deleuze means by regaining belief in this world, or, as Ronald Bogue phrases it, to 'Disenchain the chains and dissolve habitual temporal regularities' (Bogue, speaking at the *Time@20* conference, Harvard University 2005). In *Difference and Repetition*, Deleuze announces that we should 'make of repetition itself something new' (Deleuze. 1994). Deleuze arrives at the concept of difference in repetition by reading Kierkegaard through Nietzsche - the leap of faith, into immanence. The religious force in Kierkegaard (God) is dropped by Deleuze, but this force is translated into repetition, and the cosmos emerges as the infinite series of repeated dice throws. *A Life* is akin to a *Markov chain*, and has the potential for multiple outcomes.

<sup>22</sup> Borges attributes in his essay *The Analytical Language of John Wilkins* (from *Other Inquisitions: 1937-1952*) the following taxonomy to an ancient Chinese encyclopedia, the *Celestial Emporium of Benevolent Knowledge*: 'On those remote pages it is written that animals are divided into: 1.those that belong to the Emperor, 2.embalmed ones, 3.those that are trained, 4.suckling pigs, 5.mermaids, 6.fabulous ones, 7.stray dogs, 8.those included in the present classification, 9.those that tremble as if they were mad, 10.innumerable ones, 11.those drawn with a very fine camelhair brush, 12. others, 13. those that have just broken a flower vase, 14.those that from a long way off look like flies.' Scholars have questioned whether the attribution of the list to Franz Kuhn is genuine. While Kuhn did indeed translate Chinese literature, Borges' works often feature many pseudo-learned references resulting in a mix of facts and fiction. To date, no evidence for the existence of such a list has been found.

<sup>23</sup> In North America this game is called *Clue*.

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<sup>24</sup> In Atom Egoyan's *Speaking Parts* (1989) the assemblage of the edit is the product of both videotape and celluloid an electrical device. In the final sequence, video noise, celluloid memories, surveillance pictures, broadcast television and analogue playback coalesce; fragments of earlier explode into later. This sequence is an erupting fountain of cascading liquid images: characters thinking, seeing, remembering, mediated, flipping between present moments and caught in versions: the TV studio, the chapel of rest, the hotel room, the hospital video feed, all fused together by the interference threshold of their own temporal and diegetic edges.

<sup>25</sup> Deleuze 1989: 181.

<sup>26</sup> 'Our ontological error - which becomes moral, scientific, aesthetic, political, clinical error - is to signify - to become slaves to things as meaningful - including self, world, and god - rather than participating in process - expressionism in philosophy: simulacra as creative manifestation of intensity in an eternal return, refrain, or miming of the intensity itself' (Scott. *Analytica.com*, posted April 01 2005)

<sup>27</sup> See also *The Old Age of the Cinema* (Artaud 1933), which marks Artaud's break with cinema.

<sup>28</sup> See Robert Bresson (1975) *Notes on the Cinematographer*.

<sup>29</sup> See Act 1, Scene 4, *Disequilibrium*.

<sup>30</sup> An old fashioned, working class British meal comprising of the mashed and fried vegetable leftovers from the previous day's roast dinner. I put that one in for my Mother.

<sup>31</sup> From the paperback *Last Year at Marienbad* (Alain Robbe Grillet 1962). As Rodowick says of *Marienbad*, version collides with version. 'No! The door was closed!' protests one of the characters about the topography of events. *Marienbad* stages the possibility of impossible worlds, harnessing the very physicality of the edit - its being - to make these worlds seem reasonable. In *Marienbad*, the eyes of the characters are widened to the bliss and horror of disorderly time. In the silent crosscutting sequence, the edit becomes a violence done to the characters, (as too is the case in *Of Camera*).

<sup>32</sup> This is why Antonioni's colours are so arresting, because they appear to be symbolic but in fact are not. They are only colour, pure colour.

<sup>33</sup> Peirce writes that 'The being of a symbol consists in the real fact that something surely will be experienced if certain conditions be satisfied. Namely, it will influence the thought and conduct of its interpreter [...] Just as a photograph is an index having an icon incorporated into it, that is, excited in the mind by its force, so a symbol may have an icon or an index incorporated into it, that is, the active law that it is may require its interpretation to involve the calling up of an image, or a composite photograph of many images of past experiences, as ordinary common nouns and verbs do; or it may require its interpretation to refer to the actual surrounding circumstances of the occasion of its embodiment, like such words as *that, this, I, you, which, here, now, yonder*, etc. Or it may be pure symbol, neither *iconic* nor *indicative*, like the words *and, or, of*, etc' (Peirce 1932: 4.447)

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<sup>34</sup> This is the territory most commonly associated with semiotics through Roland Barthes, where signs produce thoughts that make comprehensive statements about qualities and events. As Laura U. Marks writes, 'The legisign's relation to its object is only ever symbolic, in that the sign stands for an object via an interpretant that represents the sign, as argument' (Laura U. Marks 2002: 197).

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Deleuze writes observes that 'The cinema is always narrative, and more and more, but it is dysnarrative in so far as narration is affected by repetitions, permutations and transformations which are explicable in detail by the new structure' (Deleuze. 1989: 137).

<sup>37</sup> For Shklovsky, it is not the 'images' that are crucial in poetry but rather the 'devices' deployed, a poetic speech involving a special use of language that achieves distinctiveness by deviating from and distorting, or defamiliarizing, the 'practical' language of everyday life, short-circuiting automated responses and exploding the encrustations of customary perception. This is Brecht's politic of distancing; in Benjamin (*The Author as Producer*) it is the act of reflecting, the response to the demand that an artist make his or her process evident in the art object.

<sup>38</sup> Deleuze continues: 'It was inevitable that the cinema, in the crises of the action-image, went through melancholic Hegelian reflections on its own death: having no more stories to tell, it would take itself as object and would be able to tell only its own story (Wenders). But, in fact, the work in the mirror and the work in the seed have always accompanied art without ever exhausting it, because art found in them a means of creation for certain special images' (Deleuze 1989: 76-77)

<sup>39</sup> Mikhail Bakhtin writes that 'The word (or in general any sign) is inter-individual... The author (speaker) has his own inalienable right to the word, but the listener also has his rights, and those whose voices are heard in the word before the author comes upon it also have their rights' (Bakhtin 1986: 121-122). Bakhtin and the Russian Formalists argue that a literary structure does not reflect reality, but rather the reflections and refractions of other ideological spheres. The reader, or in this case, the viewer, as a difference to the text, challenges the dominant attitude of film theory towards spectator inertia. It is important however to acknowledge that not all film spectator theory posits the viewer as passive. Vivian Sobchack refutes the idea that ideation is ever suspended in any significant way during the film viewing transaction, and David Bordwell's cognitivism regards the cinema viewer as highly active. See, Bordwell, *Making Meaning: Inference and Rhetoric in the Interpretation of Cinema*. Harvard Film Studies. 1989.

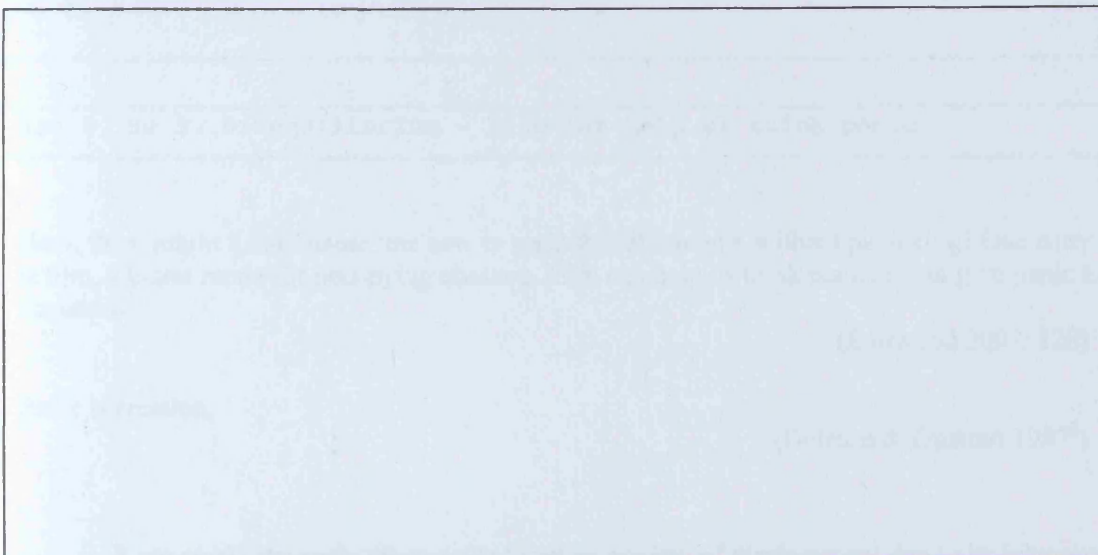
<sup>40</sup> Paul Ricoeur (1977) *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-disciplinary studies of the creation of meaning in Language*.

" book is made of words in lines and those words have a system that we understand as meaning, and we don't really pay any attention to the gaps (between the words), but if there were no gaps then we would have no words. There have to be gaps in order to define the words. It's like the way film moves through a projector gate. You have to have black between each frame, otherwise the frames blur into each other and you have no image. The way we process experience works in the same way. We aren't supposed to be aware of the gaps. The brain does the same thing. It orders in a certain way and we are accustomed to that order. We are accustomed to that calibration in our minds, even though our minds have to skip the blanks. Our minds are told not to tell ourselves about the



These are marks I produced on an aeroplane at the onset of a panic attack.





Act 1, Sc 5. Disequilibrium - film can help us think panic

How, then, might I enter panic, the new to my habitual thought, without panicking? One entry is film, a better mode for occupying absence. Film can help us think panic; it can give panic a situation.

(Eastwood 2007: 128)

Panic is creation.

(Deleuze & Guattari 1987<sup>2</sup>)

If we recall, the early cinema produced an anxiety of displacement due to its inherent disequilibrium, which, in classical cinema, is tempered by the *trick* of hyper-schemas. These schemas erase the trace of the film's body and generate instead the illusion of a Whole, through storyboards, shot-lists, contingency plans, rehearsals, impossible continuities, levels of narration, the star system and so on. There were parallels drawn between this cinematic proper and the arrangements of the sensory-motor schema, that which, as Gregory Flaxman writes, 'Having migrated into the brain [...] colonised thought to the degree that disturbances can be ignored, shunted aside, "declared unreal"' (Flaxman 2000: 103). Deleuze suggests that Bergson's immanence, which is the becoming of all matter in time, is in and around us, but partitioned off by the screen of the sensory-motor schema and its perception images. He notes that 'When a sensory-motor whole is no longer apprehensible, either in the cinema or in the world, paralysis grips the "ordinary man", as if confronted with something intolerable in the world or unthinkable in thought' (Deleuze 1989: 169<sup>3</sup>). What is outside of the sensory-motor schema? Is it possible for the cinema to extend its hodological space and make a path into this intolerable and unthinkable in our experience?<sup>4</sup>

Panic is the excess of the sensory-motor schema. It is the thought without the thinker, the idea cut adrift, a cause in itself, a spiritual automaton let loose without the guardian sensory-motor schema. Panic forecloses the thinker as it unleashes a dimensionless world of

cascading matter. There are certain persons, such as myself, who have what is called anxiety disorder, or panic attacks.<sup>5</sup> When experiencing an attack, an individual is taken to the threshold of sensory-motor stability and from that vista senses a gap that is the impending erasure of all of the physical and ideational frames of reference that constitute their identity. In Bergson, this gap is the interval between perception and mental reception (manifested as action), an interval that reveals to us the pure becoming of all matter in time, what he calls immanence. We have looked at what the cinema is, in its many guises, but what is panic?

A panic attack is described by the medical profession in a DSM publication as the spontaneous emission of a certain form of adrenaline, *norepinephrine*, from the adrenal glands located at top area of each kidney in the lower back (DSM 2000<sup>6</sup>). This emission produces a sudden feeling of intense fear or discomfort, provoking an instantaneous *fight or flight* response. Commonly, this response is not rational in its origin, although at times it is prompted by real-world events.<sup>7</sup> A shock to thought. I cannot climb back into my thinker. I can smell my sweat, taste the strong sweet acid of the apple I am eating, but the sensations are away, they are exterior, not where I am. Then panic. the violent escape of the other thinker in my thought, or when extremely tired, but for the most part panic strikes soon after falling asleep. It attacks in sleep and threatens to remove, again, again. Night panic attacks are more violent, because I do not have the conscious critical faculties to quell the sudden rush of adrenaline. Without apparent cause, or warning, I erupt from deep sleep into extreme movement, throwing myself across the room, thrashing. I have instantaneously found myself in a life without a self, at the very point where that life is entering the state of total dispersal into a world. There is often a crying out, but I am not at its origin. Not only am I not Steven Eastwood, I am not a person who is not Steven Eastwood. I am not a thinker. I am not a thought. I am not a body, merely the author of space,<sup>8</sup> only immanence and. you feel it rushing up the realization. and there it is. that He is now absented. I becomes he becomes not in the instant of this. the realization. that



this is how time is, a nothing a covering device a habit,\ a pre-fabricated location. folding in.-gone. There it is! that gap the real, and there is no experience .as it departs a book that vanishes, disinvented, it shuts closed  
many others

who have severe panic attacks describe the panic as the sensation of dying. I would say that a panic attack is worse than the fear of death, or what I can imagine the experience of death might be like. What I am encountering during an attack is that no thing *is*, no thing exists or has ever existed: that there is no place or time to be born into, and no place or time from which to die. Here is another testimony, not my own but another's, but one that starts to suggest the confederacy between this traumatic interval and the displacement the cinema presents to us:

I look at this body and can't understand why I am within it. I hear myself having conversations and wonder where the voice is coming from. I imagine myself seeing life as if it were played like a film in a cinema. But in that case, where am I? Who is watching the film? What is the cinema? The worst part is that this seems as if it's the truth, and the periods of my life in which I did not feel like this were the delusions. (Anon<sup>9</sup>)

Now, what does this testimony do, and what is this written text *doing* to explicate panic and its relation with film? The impossibility of documenting any of these experiences as we undergo them, or even of thinking them, inevitably results in difficulty when attempting to say anything substantial about the structure of such lapses. So, can we assign panic a language, or a body?<sup>10</sup> Panic is the ineffable in the language of the visionary, the unutterable in my language and I have always retained something sacred in the unspeakable nature of it and indirectly the punctuation and the semblance freely, of voices that are not established. To speak of or about panic is to reduce the unspeakable into speech, and this is to be in the place where panic is not. Panic is the loss of the word and the loss of the thinker, the Kantian sublime, an opening of the mind onto immanence. But

speak of it I do, in moving image and in this text, if only to observe how it evades the moving image and the text.<sup>11</sup>

In the 1640s Henry Moore called this the *sensorium*, the state before meaning is reduced in response to external data (his description is very close to Deleuzian *affect*, which I will come to, in time). This state of the thought without the thinker is almost always equated with horror and therefore elicits panic. Artaud wailed that it was to stare nature in the face and hear, as a distant scream, the sound of one's own thinking. Walter Benjamin called it the *rausch* or *sprung*, a moment of discontinuity or a profane illumination, 'the sudden spark that ignites the mind with its solution' (Benjamin 1999B<sup>12</sup>). Panic is a chasm, intimate then with the *chiasmus* in Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, the (much romanticised) space between language and not-language. This gap is redolent of Lacan's absent cause (again, confederate with Deleuzian *affect*). In the novel *Nausea* (1938) Jean-Paul Sartre refers to *the filth*, a state altogether abhorrent in its terrifying being. That everything *is*. In Borges' short story *The Aleph* (1949, revised 1974) we find panic as a point in space that contains all other points, not a reliable and determinable terrain, but literally an 'everywhere' and an 'everything' which is hideous in its immanence. Similarly, William Burroughs declared panic as 'the sudden intolerable knowing that everything is alive.'

We have named it: panic is the gap, and this gap is prior to any and all structures. Blanchot writes, 'What is first is not the plenitude of being, it is the crack and the fissure, the erosion and the tear; intermittence and the gnawing privation' (Blanchot 1959: 49-50). Alain Badiou, like Deleuze, accounts for this void in our thinking as a *rupture* or *cut*. This void is not entirely a lack or absence, and neither is the panic attack which pulls towards this void, or is pulled towards it. Hollis Frampton, in *Circles of Confusion* (Frampton 1983<sup>13</sup>) describes such peculiar absences as an entry into 'ecstatic time' - the upsurge when the plates of memory and imagination press together in mental anxiety and create a burst of cognitive energy. If we

think of panic as the apparent transgression of the containment of identity within the body and within sensible thought, then there are shades of panic in Irigaray's *mucous* and there is most certainly distress in Deleuze and Guattari's *interval*, both of which theorize exceeding thought and exceeding the body, in order to enter a pure affirmation, the chartless channel where we may happen upon little archipelagos of our becoming as imperceptible beings. After all, the channels may be smooth but they are recognized by our sensory-motors as turbulent. Most, if not all of us, do not desire to be imperceptible. We thrash and we cry out. The outside has achieved totality as an open whole with zero interiority. There is no more perceiver; immanence is liberated from containment within dialectic and duality. The thinking subject has lost any distinction between exteriority and interiority, between before and after. Deleuze gives a name to this state: pure *affect*.<sup>14</sup> The inside of us becomes dispersed into the outside, onto the plane of immanence, where it is unreasoned. We cannot see or be seen there, and neither is it possible for us to return from there with artifacts. The above text is likewise a fleeting barrage to the thinking sensorium, a wall of references that fire as provocation before quickly dissolving into nothing. These are the outlines of limit situations, pointers to gaps, gaps that are presently absent. A panic attack, a picroleptic episode, an epileptic seizure, a drug trip: none of these absences are visible to others. They can only be perceived in their exterior affection-images, in the face of the absentee, the expression of the draining away of sensible thought evidenced on the features of the departed during their momentary abdication of mental and sensory functions.

Panic is the plane of immanence. The plane of immanence is the infinite possible (the indivisible) of all possible thought, '...not a concept that is or can be thought but rather the image of thought, the image thought gives itself of what it means to think, to make use of thought, to find one's bearings in thought' (Deleuze & Guattari 1996: 37). The supreme act of philosophy, Deleuze and Guattari go on to say, is not to think the plane of immanence but to show that it is there, unthought. Like the footprints of the crew in the sand on the set of

*Lawrence of Arabia*, the trick of the sensory-motor schema has been to erase the tracks of its own machine, so that, outside of trauma or drug intake, it is difficult to find (to think) a path back to immanence. However, as Gregory Flaxman observes, 'if the route back to the unbridled images of the plane of immanence has been closed off, the hopes of cinema and philosophy are, as we find in *The Time-Image*, cast with a new project: to trigger the deregulations of the sensory-matrix itself, to disrupt the certainty of the image-relay, and finally to assemble the intensities of the plane of immanence on the body itself (Flaxman 2000: 103). In *What is Philosophy?* Deleuze and Guattari write of the unthinkable at the edge of thought. Panic is *a life* as it thinks towards the limit situation of thinking itself, where there is no thinker. The very problem is to try to think what is not thinkable as an aspect of thought, to think what is possible in cinema as it encounters its own limit and peers out into the not possible of its own media. How temporal and spatial can our creative experiments into pure immanence be, given the formats of a life, in the lived world and an image on a tape or a print? Precisely what kind of a cinematic shock to thought brings about these temporary crevices? How can I use film to make folds in the fold I already make in the plane of immanence?

Well, we now have a good idea of the similarities (in the form of habit and cliché) between the sensory-motor matrix and the normative filmic text. We know that the plane of immanence that Deleuze so animatedly takes from Bergson is outside of narrative and narrativisation, and that narrative in fact eclipses instances of immanence. However, both classical cinema and time-image cinema introduce aspects of sheer panic and of an encounter with immanence through the frame of narrative. In the movement-image, the absence that panic elicits is framed by the explicit psychology of a character, as is the case in traumatic dream sequences.<sup>15</sup> In the time-image, absence is presented to us as the more complex inter-thinking of filmmaker, character and film itself.<sup>16</sup> The examples Deleuze gives of time-images ordinarily utilise dominant character conditions such as mental instability as the basis for a

temporal departure, eliciting a wandering about through which the filmmaker is able to encounter abstraction. Antonioni's *The Passenger* (1975) offers several disorienting departures from a stable and sensible world. Like the mind instructing the eyes to partially de-register from present perception and look left when remembering, or look right when imagining, the camera appears to look away from its subject, in order to purely think. In the desert, the shot tracks past and away from David Locke (Jack Nicholson) into a wide vista that has no symbolic or narrative content, but is instead a purely optical and sound situation that fills the space where something is, for example, 'too powerful, or too unjust, but sometimes also too beautiful, and which henceforth outstrips our sensory-motor capacities' (Deleuze 1989: 18). Later, in the remote hotel room, the sequence rotates through reels of time. As the audio recording of the conversation between Locke and Robertson is played back, the camera moves out from the building into a remembered space, and then back into the hotel, slipping into the past-present moment of the recording of the tape. And isn't Antonioni's passenger a body of thoughts without thinker, let loose on a world of any spaces whatever? As Locke remarks 'I used to be somebody else... but I traded myself in.'

David Lynch's *Mulholland Drive* (2001) is a panic-in-general that seems to wrap its cloak around all characters and events. The narrative is nothing but a series of tremors in the black Los Angeles night, where the protagonist Betty is cast and re-cast into bodies and social worlds that cannot contain her or that she cannot maintain. She is in a state of panic, her identity long since left behind, and the film panics with her, dropping in and out of its own system, generating preposterous clues to its unsolvable puzzle, muddying the order of events, events that may never even have transpired.<sup>17</sup> In Michael Haneke's *Caché* (2005) each dramatic scene arrives and unfolds as a vulnerable duration, because at any moment the diegetic space is threatened by a sickening tug into mediation. We cannot separate the character's psychology from our own, owing to the very fact that every situation carries with it the latent pressure of being revealed to us as merely video *playback*, just another tape

through the door, where videotape is the double for the lived world. This is the menace of mediation; the fear of being pulled into another plane, another thought, an unsafe thought (and this too is the case in *Of Camera*). Here is the panic of finding that the comfortable world is not the world, or not the only world. In the sparse home of the adult Algerian, the locked-off camera clinically observes the émigré's violent suicide, only to cut to another angle. All of a sudden the staple screen arrangement of shots becomes horrifyingly disturbed by a force that resists binding to the intention or pursuit of any on-screen character and more greatly resembles the very intentionality of the film (the other thinker).<sup>18</sup> In these film examples we can see traumatised characters prone in time, encountering uncommon sensory experiences that are out of kilter with the patterns and perceptions of the normal social world around them. But beneath these characters is the character of the film itself, also prone in time. Its images are not tethered; they constitute an on-screen sensibility that seeks out slippery temporal states, and holds strong, somehow, inside of them, outside of them. This is what Vivian Sobchack means when she says that the cinema transposes the intrasubjective privacy of direct experience (Sobchack 1992: 11). If there is surrogacy at work in the classical film operation, in terms of the character or the argument as stand in for our selves, then in the spastic arrangement of uncertain films, the surrogate provided is absence itself. What do we think of these absences and where might we go with them?

Paul Virilio has made much of the capability the cinema possesses to engender departures. In *The Aesthetics of Disappearance* (1991) Virilio uses the term *picnolepsy* for the kinds of lapses in consciousness we are opening our thoughts to. He writes,

The return being just as sudden as the departure, the arrested word and action are picked up again where they have been interrupted. Conscious time comes together again automatically, forming a continuous time without apparent breaks... However, for the picnoleptic, nothing really has happened, the missing time never existed. At each crisis, without realizing it, a little of his or her life simply escaped.

(Virilio 1991: 9)

Once the picnoleptic episode is over, normal consciousness and a linear experience of time is resumed. Virilio remarks that these absences are described by, amongst others, epileptics. Dostoyevsky witnessed what he described as the 'shipwreck of the senses' that emerged rapidly at the moment prior to every epileptic seizure, 'At that moment I understood the meaning of the singular expression: there will no longer be time' (*Notes From Underground* <sup>19</sup>). Thus, the picnoleptic bows out for a time, and experiences pure duration, a primitive, pre-linguistic, non-intellectual flow of time, a denatured time, whose ontology is prior to the sensory-motor re-training of the stream of temporality. What the sensory-motor schema compresses through memory, and eclipses through narrative, the picnoleptic mind expands, so that our subjective prehension of all things - the contraction of the real - is suddenly reversed and opened, as the perception of nothing other than the becoming of time itself. Virilio quotes Bergson when he says 'It's our duration that thinks' (Virilio 1991: 22<sup>20</sup>), and adds that picnolepsy may well become an experiential method for human development, so that 'Anyone would now live a duration which would be his own and no one else's, by way of what you would call the uncertain conformation of his intermediate times, and the picnoleptic onset would be something that could make us think of human liberty, in the sense that it would be a latitude given to each man to invent his own relations to time' (Virilio 1991: 22). Like the picnoleptic absence, 'becoming' is to momentarily relinquish one's boundaries as an identity and in its place enter into a state of being as open set; it is to be only matter in time. This is why Deleuze (and Guattari) advocated a practice of *schizoanalysis* (literally to be *like* the schizophrenic, as Walter Benjamin, and also Theodor W. Adorno had advocated before them<sup>21</sup>), because such a practice affords a momentary absence into immanence without the risk of all encompassing mental illness. The moving image is an automaton we can use to practise schizoanalysis and to generate picnoleptic absence. Virilio finds in the moving image the hypnogogic state through which to gain 'entry into another logic' (Virilio 1991: 62).



In *A Wrinkle in Time*, Alan Wright notes that 'The picnoleptic cut exposes the "depth of time" that eludes conscious, or even unconscious, perception. Another level of time, extendible and elastic, absorbs the picnoleptic subject, yet he or she remains immersed in the measured flow of chronological time' (Wright 1996: 59<sup>22</sup>). Wright finds such a non-linear and fragmentary temporal sensibility in Tarkovsky's *Mirror*. The potentiality of cinema as an other time is given in *Mirror*, when the adolescent boy Ignat, left alone in his Mother's apartment, is confronted by what a camera frame and an edit can do, which is to collapse spatial temporalities: the apartment is folded into its duplicate, from another time. We see the indexical ring of hot condensation left on the glass coffee table after a cup (must) have been lifted, and this marks the join between one time and another. Here is a world not sensible to our own topographies of space and time, and Tarkovsky locates this ability to slide around in and out of time within the mind of the young child. This is not only the assigned perception of actual child characters (although there are several) but also a disequilibrium spiraling out from the psychology of the film as a thought-like composition. The way that sequences extend, fold, unfold and skip in time is more akin to the pre-linguistic world as the child experiences it, where temporality is giddy but not yet frightening in the way that adult panic is. It is clear that both the cinema and the child in intuitive play have a propensity for disequilibrium. States of exhilaration and perceptual absence are particularly associated with how children delight in a sense of imbalance, frequently engineering turning and spinning in play, whereas the configurations of the mature brain and inner ear make the majority of adults resistant to imbalance. Not only the inner ear but also the child brain operates differently. Indeed, Virilio develops his concept of picnolepsy by making a connection between the underlying durational skews of the cinema and the *woofs and warps* (Peirce's semiotic terms) in the sheets of the polymorphous point of view of a child's perception.<sup>23</sup> William James uses the phrase 'blooming, buzzing confusion' to describe the young child's unprocessed experience of seeing the world as one 'bigness', which is as yet unregulated by language

(James 1950: 488<sup>24</sup>). *Mirror* presents the world remembered by an adult who tries to place his thoughts into the spinning top mind of his once very young self.

This is what Deleuze terms the *pre-hodological* space, '[the] ...space before action, always haunted by a child, or by a clown, or by both at once. It is a pre-hodological space... The obstacle does not, as in the action-image, allow itself to be determined in relation to goals and means which would unify the set, but is dispersed in 'a plurality of ways of being present in the world,' of belonging to sets, all incompatible and yet co-existent' (Deleuze 1989: 203<sup>25</sup>). The exodus from historic time into chiasmic time encountered by the picnoleptic, the young child, or the person panicking, has no ticking handles registering its regularity, for, the present of this time may loop, bend around and fold in on the person who is experiencing it. During its rude opening, this kind of a present moment finds its becoming as the *between* of past and future relations, and it emerges in this way rapidly, without the interlacing of those past and future events as safety handles. This constitutes a crisis for the sensory-motor schema, an interruption in time as it is relayed to us. The mind either swiftly regulates this interruption as a commonplace blip, or, conversely, reacts to it as distressing, even life threatening, irrespective of the lack of a real-world referent. A cinema that severs ties with comparable teleological imperatives moves towards an open-Whole that is akin to the pre-linguistic experience of the child, the shocked person and the trauma victim. However, if this cinema tries to give equivalence to the experience of the child, or equivalence to the person who is dreaming, or panicking, it falls back into description, and into motivated and orderly units in a sequence. In *Mirror*, what is couched as the dream or the non-linear memory of a child cannot maintain such a flimsy and clichéd frame, indeed it has no desire to, and so the arrangement spills over, so that one image after another arrives, not as our time, not even as a child's time, but as the pressure of *cinema time*. *Mirror* does not offer symbolic images, but rather the imaginary which is the cinema itself: its superimpositions and transitions, its slowing of time, its irrational cuts and match-cuts whose only signification is the real which is cinema, what

Tarkovsky memorably referred to as the 'second reality' (Tarkovsky 1989). The film generates ripples within its own liquid composition, arcs that merge with, intensify or cancel out other arcs, and repetitions that are never quite the same as before. These are the movements of the cinema - its motions, its own thoughts, its spaces and its transfigured time. The Russian director said of *Mirror* that even the author might not be able to extract meaning or sense from its images in inverse series.

In the instances of such time-images a panic cinema fleetingly shows its face: the not seeable in vision, the not possible in movement, the not-yet in thought. This is a fluid cinema that no longer speaks for or produces a people and a world, but instead delights in the moving image as a verb without an identifiable syntax or subject. Deleuze and Guattari speak of an 'imperceptibility' that lies just outside of a normative perceptual range. The cinema can give us this extra perception, by speeding up, slowing down or skewing time, and through the general causality of a new and other nature: the nature of the film (and video) image. In *Of Camera* there is the turning inside out of the film, as it becomes, along a flight line away from its own narrative habits, on the page, on the set, in the edit, in the gate, on the screen. The character touches the edge of the frame, her hands are a noise of video surface; she calls out to halt her own rapid advancement along the tape. The 'of' in *Of Camera* is a celluloid film print, and it is videotape, each the conveyor of image sensations. Of is a body, its conduct, its passage. In *Of Camera* the woman is made of magnetic particles on videotape and the Man is made of celluloid, but this is still symbolic, linguistic, and only the general manner of the idea. In our own consciousness, 'of' is thought as the conductor of experience, it is the form by which we locate ourselves as thinking bodies and from which we become absent. Our intentions as thinking and productive subjects are premised on the management of the 'and/or' relation, on past knowledge and future speculation. Should I do this, or should I do that? A panic attack is the 'and,' and only the *and*, a content-less relation. *Of Camera* makes the cinema the very cause of the characters' panic, as they are opened on to the inescapable

immanence of their own film, a rickety continuity that is never entirely sealed and can only ever bleed. The actuality of on-set, in edit, and on-screen constructions threatens to emerge, and does in fact emerge, not only in this film, but also in every moment of any film.

A panic cinema occurs when diegesis and film spatiality reveals its centre as absence, when deliberate or poor direction creates tectonic shifts in shot/reverse-shot orientations, when the body-mind of the film text slides around without ground, or when it leaps from first person to third person at will and without intention.<sup>26</sup> Such leaps are notable in Italian neo-realist use of free-indirect discourse, where subjective and objective points of view are interchangeable and indeterminate. Outside of the intentions of an author, cinema limit situations find emergence through bad filmmaking and through error - the momentary absences when the film print jams in the projector gate or the reel is changed, or when a dramatic scene is panned and scanned for broadcast ratio, leaving the viewer concentrating on an out-of-focus speaking character who resides in the tele-proportioned area of the intended cinematic frame. When the image burns under the glare of the projector bulb, top-down and bottom-up operations conflate and topographic confusion occurs. Whether accidental, bad, or purposeful, without this pulling away from a familiar plane - the face of Lana Turner, now scratched; the surveyed room disclosed as videotape in playback - the time-image has no power to emerge and would only be perceivable as formal abstraction. Time-images push away from movement-images in the way that an astronaut attached by a lifeline pushes away from a satellite, dependent on the object for propulsion, but in a flight line out and away from the structure and into the void. The time-image draws out the incommensurable and the incomprehensible from the actions of the movement-image. Perhaps this is why Žižek, amongst others, maintains that Deleuze is Hegelian, because his concept of the time-image is always in the equation of the movement-image, as that which it is not.

A fundamental aspect of the cinema-as-gap is to encounter its own limit as a physical medium and as a narrative producing system, for the cinema to panic itself, to disassemble, to shatter itself from its inside so that what is within is wrapped around what is without. Panic is a nowhere that must paradoxically be somewhere, that is, so long as we return from it. This state is to become the world in general and to relinquish the illusion of centre. This is what Christian Marazzi describes when he explains that, 'When one is at the mercy of panic one escapes towards nowhere, towards anywhere: one seeks refuge in the world in its totality' (Christian Marazzi 2004<sup>27</sup>). In *Like a House on Fire*, a character wakes up to find that he is the room, he is the house; he is the film. I made a 'woofing' sound last night, when I came partially awake into my not thinking body; a cry into space, a cry out and also a cry as utterance to situate a mind absented from spatial regulation: woof but not yet word. The world tightening around, it is absurd, now. There, you go then. that stage that rises from under the floor: panic. a curtain opening. I become awake, but into a break, bolting upright into a gap. The inside and outside are unclear. I have no distinction between mind, body and house. I think I am the house and I cannot locate the place of my sentience that is not the house. I am house without body.<sup>28</sup> Panicking, I throw myself around the room. I call out for a light to be switched on, so that optically I can re-situate myself as *I* and not as *everything is*.

In psychoanalytic terms, notably Lacan, the real is the 'everything else' that cannot be contained by the frames we use to manage experience, such as language. Žižek writes, 'Properly understood, the Real is thus not another centre, a "deeper", "true" focal point or "black hole" around which the symbolic formations fluctuate; it is rather the obstacle on account of which every centre is always displaced, missed' (Žižek 2003<sup>29</sup>). Žižek gives an image to the Real and it is the image of an obstruction, what he calls, 'that bone in the throat' (Žižek 2003<sup>30</sup>). This Real is the *and* which is situated between representations of it. This *and*

is antagonism, a pushing and pulling between unstable models and approximate likenesses, and Žižek finds it elected in both Lacan and Badiou as a tool for prizing open an access into the Kantian sublime. This *and*, Žižek says, is a radical rupture, an event encounter with the Real, 'Or, again, the Real is simultaneously *the Thing* to which direct access is not possible and the obstacle which prevents this direct access; the Thing which eludes our grasp and the distorting screen which makes us miss the Thing' (Žižek, in Hallward 2004: 168-172<sup>31</sup>). In Lacan this "everything else" is the phenomenological space of the imaginary, before the symbolic: the traumatic core of the real, which cannot be integrated into the symbolic order. This *real real*, Žižek elaborates, is neither a meaningless formula nor an image too strong, but a tiny gap between phenomena. The symbolic order and the sensory-motor schema (perhaps they are one and the same) act as screens through which reality is presentable. Otherwise the image would be abhorrent in its vividness, its scale, and its sheer existence (this again is the Kantian sublime). This is what trauma is in psychoanalysis, an unmanageable and abhorrent real that curves the ostensibly straight space of the thinking subject, although as Žižek observes, Freud (in line with Einstein), turned this around and suggested that space is first symbolically curved, then the thinking subject invents or resuscitates trauma (using narrative tropes), in order to account for his or her own imbalances.<sup>32</sup> Whether the trauma itself is a glimpse at an underlying curved space or a tear within an otherwise continual straight space cannot be determined, certainly not from the space of the passage of this text, but we know that for the recipient a trauma is a shattering experience, an external cause that throws the subject into total disparity, so much so that the victim of a trauma often holds tightly to the event, redefining themselves in terms of the before and after of what affected them. Trauma creates pure *affect*, a response without established cause, the movement of life when it is most threatened, where shock fundamentally changes orientation to intellect, to body and to self.

For a moment I would like to explore this space of affect, before elaborating on its relation to the moving image. Peirce postulated that time is, 'the continuum *par excellence*,

through the spectacles of which we envisage every other continuum' (Peirce, quoted in Doane 2002: 8-9). Doane adds to this by stating that 'the rationalisation of time ruptures the continuum *par excellence* and generates epistemological and philosophical anxieties' (Doane 2002: 9). Peirce asked, *where does perception end and thinking begin?* He gives the example of a blow to the head that comes without warning and from behind. Something has unexpectedly and violently come into experience, but the receiver of the blow does not immediately know what this something is. The shock creates an interruption that produces an alteration in the course plotting of the victim's space and time. The mind tries to think itself back up to sensible space and, finding that it cannot, it creates panic and fights with the space. As Brian Massumi elucidates, the street below and around the subject who has been struck loses geometry and becomes a vector space, what Massumi calls 'the edge of the virtual' (Massumi 2002: 215). This space is not emptiness, however, but rather *a question not yet answered*; it is the activation of pure affect, which begins to move and then finds thought again. Affect is the state of being moved, the state of being between implications; it is a bodily event from where thought can start over again. Enfolded in the shock event are unfoldings, some of which offer the capacity for going towards a limit. In this space, Žižek writes 'all qualitative differences inherent to the social edifice are suspended. This supernumerary stands for the 'pure' difference, the non-social within the field of the social' (Žižek, in Hallward 2004: 166<sup>33</sup>). We do not commonly take creative occupation of this panic state, but instead quickly leap into the security of closed communities. In the shock of this distended vectoring of all matter the subject looks for solutions in several directions, either towards the collective, which is safety, or towards the pre-individual, which might constitute a loss of identity altogether.<sup>34</sup>

But this affect state is something worth remaining in, like a cloth or an invisible cloak that is wrapped around things. Affect is an infra-individual level, what Massumi describes as the feeling of the transition that is not reducible to a description of what is happening. This

feeling - *the feeling of a feeling* - is exactly the state that Deleuze says causes an idea. Panic and affect are the same then, a pure stream, impersonal, pre-reflexive, a flux. Affect and panic are not experiences. They are not *the* life, or myself who is *in* life, or *has* life, but merely 'a life' (Deleuze 2001<sup>35</sup>), *a life* that is a plane of immanence. A panic attack is the sentience of one's situatedness as changing matter in time, where sensations are away, exterior, not where I am (and where I am is not where I was). This is perhaps what a phenomenologist means by the expression 'the experience of experience,' for experiential reflexivity is to regard the being of one's self as though from the outside, which is also the same as panic. This is a momentary bottom-up perception within the human lived-body. Inter-textual perception occurs during a panic attack, by the simple virtue that no panic attack completes itself. Every panic attack is a rhizome, in that the experience does not resolve but rather dissipates, the pulse of its chemical flood spreading and then declining. Therefore, a panic attack is the *between* text, oscillating between sensory habit and void absence. A panic attack never fully *becomes* in time but it is always the threat of its own becoming, a middle without completion. To complete a panic attack would be to be removed from the world, to be fully de-situated - not to die but to be removed and then to have never been. It is this very threat that constitutes an attack, and the completion of this threat would constitute the non-existence of this author, this text and the world around this author and this text.

We should be clear then that an experience outside of the thinker is not a blissful non-Hegelian *atopos*. Maurice Blanchot posits such a becoming as an interminable moment, a hell all around identity that makes of language a utopia (Blanchot 1949<sup>36</sup>). Blanchot warns that to determine to encounter this absence may entail something infinitely less tolerable than the delimitations of language. Can we even attempt to voluntarily exempt ourselves from dialectical containment, and should we try? Irigaray continually announces a possible sense-experience beyond the customary, and this, as Tamsin Lorraine suggests, brings her thinking into close sensibility with Deleuze's sensory-motor interruption, which is to become an open



set, to *become-imperceptible*. But Irigaray is hesitant, suggesting that language and identity must be warmed and re-moulded, as more liquid, as poetic, not collapsed into noise and dispersed into abstraction. Deleuze offers schizoanalysis as the means to stray from dialectical relations, and the lifeline to return along, but he and Guattari are also hesitant, warning against wild destratification in *What is Philosophy?* (1987), and proposing that we make absences by extending matter in art, in text and in thought, where the material alterations to objects and the virtual enhancements to thoughts are the safe substitute for a mental encounter with an abyss in thought.<sup>37</sup> Certainly, the blow of panic cannot be dressed up as an epiphany, and it cannot be harnessed or transformed, as useful, as productive, but it may generate an idea, and it is thoughts that we are after. Žižek writes: 'This tragic encounter of the impossible Real is the limit experience of a human being; one can only sustain it, one cannot force a passage through it' (Žižek, in Hallward 2004: 171<sup>38</sup>). He argues that we can adopt one of two attitudes to any encounter with the void: either maintain what he calls a 'proper distance [...] marked by simultaneous attraction and repulsion,' towards what is perceived as the 'impossible-Real Limit of the human experience' or instead try to orient the void as that, 'through which we should (and, in a way, even always-already have) pass(ed)' (Žižek, *ibid*). The medium of the cinema offers a manageable displacement for an attempt at the former, and even at the latter. To add to their taxonomy, one method for what Deleuze and Guattari call *becoming imperceptible* is to engage in the practices of film as panic proposition.

This is why Artaud says that the most characteristic and striking quality of the cinema was always the effect of hazard.<sup>39</sup> And this is why Deleuze celebrates the moving image as a *nooshock* to thought. When it was new, and in so far as it still can produce utterances that are unregulated, the moving image presents itself to the viewer as a destratified affect space, populated by uncommon time. In the cinema we have already invented another way to live time, our collective license to enter into and manipulate durations, to distend temporality and mock History as teleological order. The moving image gives a becoming to a pre and post-

individual world, it shows to us the interval in our own thinking, and it does so without significant distress. How, then, might I enter panic, the new to my habitual thought, without panicking? One entry is film, a better mode for occupying absence. Film can help us think panic; it can give panic a situation. We can use cinema to think time, to encounter aberrations in thought, aberrations that without the aid of cinema would be received as distressing. Cinema can be a panic navigator, the moving image a medium for forming articulations that are not panic, but rather the gap produced and encountered in trying to articulate panic. The cinema always fails when it tries to be like our perception, even when that attempted likeness is perception interrupted, or perception distended. The Cinema cannot represent panic, and serves very badly as its illustration, but it may function as panic's torn and mis-folded map. Film is my friend in this otherness of thought, it is the increase of my thought, its acceleration, but also its slowing and slewing, into an unknown body. The cinema as spiritual automaton is this cartography, my tool for absence; my new map in de-territorialization. The cinema is a panic hodos, a path, a hodological space for pre-hodological intensities; a virtual situated in an actual. The cinema is the set of panic-like thoughts, a dispersion, the body's life striving in its appetite for more life through the extension of perception and the distention of thought, striving to be more than life, to expand its potential, extend its sense, deepen its feeling, enter the exterior to its own experience. This is a taking flight cinema that turns movement around a void, a thought gap. Think! - cinema as the method for putting a joyful panic into the world. A panic cinema is precisely to exploit the cinema's ontology as the space for a mind to encounter gaps in thought without panic. When it is let loose outside of its normative conventions this gap is cinema. I make films not to express panic but to give extensivity to it, to occupy panic as affect, and fashion it as a further movement to my being. This outside is the sense of the world as extra-linguistic. Like consciousness, it recedes from us as soon as we perceive it or even conceive of it. To be aware of it is to render it inside, into corporeal

and conceptual logics. There is an indeterminate that we can attempt to utter in moving images and this is why it is necessary to keep cinema outside and pre-hodological.

I have written so much, stared at the screen for so long, that I am close to panic, now. The not this. The not is. Let's try to write it. Panic is my other thinker in thought, but I lack the apparatus, the evolved spiritual automaton, to make cartographies of it with which to chart passage (not a map of but a map through). The moving image offers the possibility of touching upon an indeterminate outside of thought, ordinarily experienced as panic by the brain. The films I have made set about a form of becoming by operating non-isomorphically between fluid and solid states.<sup>40</sup> Every film is a topographical foray into absence (even if this absence appears to be contained); it is never a map in itself. Panic is an unexpected absence. The cinema is an absence without seizure, a prosthetic technical device for facilitating access to an intermediated understanding of time and of space whilst not robbing our minds of agency. It is precisely because we know that the cinematograph is the cause of our momentary absence in the cinema that we as viewers do not react to it with a depth of absence that would, outside of the cinema, be processed as panic.<sup>41</sup> Cinema is not the representation of panic - it is the *enactment* of panic. It is a method for reform to our experience.

Make the indiscernible, that is the frontier, visible.

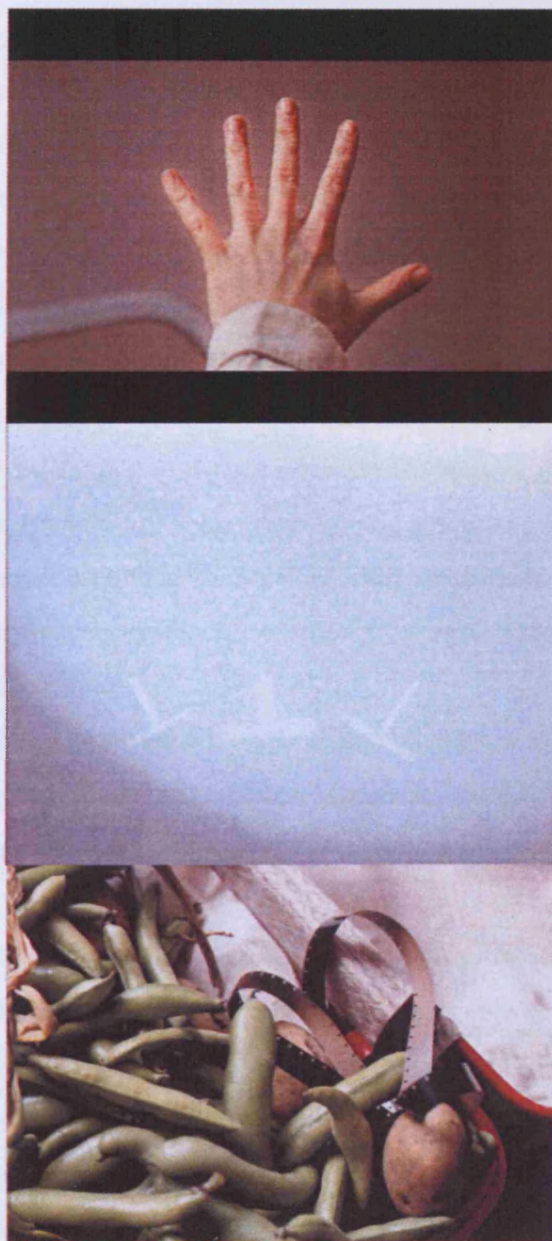
(Deleuze 1989: 180)

It is not my desire to make a theory or a representation of this void but rather to creatively encounter its difference. I desire to flood as a panic without racing to rid myself of its horrific between. I do not wish to romanticize panic, but I would like to think it, to rob it of its barbs by diverting it, and the vessel I am proposing to use on this journey into panic is the moving image. In the moving image there is a world other than this world but very much like it. There is something akin to our lived space, but with different spatial properties and values.

I see in it spaces in time, but they are not my habit, they are more than my thought and other than my perception. This, then, is where it is possible to draw parallels between an aberrant cinema and the temporal absences that make up a panic attack: time-images can suggest to the imagination departures from the habitual schemas of our thought, because beneath the classical form of cinema, film *is* anxiety.<sup>42</sup> This anxiety can open up and maintain the kinds of gaps that the sensory-motor schema rushes to close down during a panic attack. Cinema's wild spiritual automaton (its unknown body) has the capacity to facilitate the agreeable passage into the gap; it *becomes* this gap, without provoking typical fight or flight resistance. In this unknown body the cinema as interval and panic as interval coalesce. The cinema is the construction of an abstract machine that manufactures affect and makes intimacies with panic. Its house is a mobile home with mobile sections - a place to arrange to meet panic in. Such a disjointed cinema 'panics' the viewer through an array of rooms, vistas, affects, time zones, transitions and disorders, without narrative as ground. If the classical cinema is the lived world structured in the form of our own consciousness, then aberrant time-images have the potential to reverse this operation, so that the cinema is a consciousness (other than that of our own in the lived world) that makes panic accessible to us. And more, because there is the possibility of an encounter with the exterior lived world by way of a consciousness structured in cinema, what I will call the not-yet-moving image, a possibility, a *veil*, a peculiar thought we are now able to have, what Deleuze calls '...the cartesian diver in us, unknown body which we have only at the back of our heads whose age is neither ours nor that of our childhood, but a little time in the pure state' (Deleuze 1989: 169).

The moving image is a navigable absence, and we can go as far as to say that panic is the same as the cinematic, in the occultist and pre-linguistic sense of cinema, in the aberrant sense, because both cinema and panic tear through the veils of an imaginary and symbolic real. The crisis of thought in panic *is* the crisis of cinema. Fault-lines in the moving image and traumatic ruptures within thought form sheets that interlace. We become absent with the

cinema as it slides, its provisional language choking on the bone in the throat that is the film's actual and virtual body. This is why a cinema that has the conviction of remaining precarious, ill-formed and on the verge of dispersal can have sympathy with our own imperceptibility, as it becomes. I am aware of the fragility of my own boundaries and limits. I do not desire robust films. Both this cinema and myself vibrate as molecular, abstract and in the flow of alterity.<sup>43</sup> Why then would I be more likely to have a panic attack in the cinema than on the street? It may well be that during this cinema time I am the film and the film is myself, because the cinema is the space of the world and myself combined, as an unknown body.



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<sup>1</sup> (Steven Eastwood, transcribed from Dictaphone, 1997). This is an extract from a spoken account of a disturbing episode under the influence of psilocybe mushrooms, which are hallucinogens, something a person with panic disorder should not take very often, or indeed at all. The text is included in the appendices of this document.

<sup>2</sup> The maximal point of creativity is a chaos, where infinite change, infinite randomness, infinite speed and infinite determination coalesce to constitute a life, which is only an immanence, a changing.

<sup>3</sup> The interruption of the sensory-motor schema is often experienced around a traumatic limit situation, such as an accident or a shock, and is something the schema deliberately inhibits or limits.

<sup>4</sup> De Gaetano (1993) points out that Deleuze regards the movement-image as unfolding in a Euclidean and 'hodological space' while Bresson and neorealism unfold in a Riemannian space, Robbe-Grillet in a quantum space, Resnais in probabilistic and topological spaces, and Herzog and Tarkovsky in crystallized spaces.

<sup>5</sup> I have been experiencing panic attacks for the past eighteen years, half of my life in fact (although there are also a couple of isolated experiences from my childhood). In the first five years or so of experiencing these attacks I was more prone to an episode during the day, and, with the help of a number of psychologists, I developed strategies for deflating these episodes at the moment they arose.

<sup>6</sup> In order for the encounter to be classified as a panic attack, the individual must experience at least four symptoms of anxiety from a DSM established list (*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Edition* (DSM-IV, American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Clinicians characterize any episode with fewer than four of these symptoms as a 'limited symptom attack,' usually attributable to normal "fight or flight" reactions to fear or danger. Panic attacks are almost always short in duration (typically 5-10 minutes), and this is understood to relate to the potency of the *norepinephrine* burst released into the blood. Around seventy percent of the population will have a panic attack at least once in their life. The word panic derives from the God Pan who, according to the Jungian principle of synchronism, connects the nature 'within' to the nature 'without'- the manifestation of the world in general, no longer in particular.

<sup>7</sup> For example, a person may have a panic attack based on the dread of crashing in an aeroplane, but a panic attack is also just as likely to happen abstractly, as is the case in agoraphobia, which is the fear of wide-open spaces. Most commonly a panic attack occurs as a result of the fear of having an attack.

<sup>8</sup> Comparable to Rimbaud's 'Je est un autre.'

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in on-line article *Strangers to Ourselves*, copyright © 2004 - Jeffrey Abugel and Depersonalization.info.

<sup>10</sup> Julia Kristeva's study of Proust, *Time and Sense* (1997) describes how situations like these, what she terms affects and emotions, must be framed discursively in order to be recognizable and communicable to others. But she explains that when we express affects discursively, we tend to express them qualitatively, as judgments, and in doing so we disguise their specificity by making them into a sort of reasoning - reasoning in search of itself. Panic is not reasonable however and cannot be reasoned. This attempt to articulate or make figural what is excessive and

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without physical or temporal certainty means that we as thinking subjects are continually looking for modes of expression for an unspeakable realm of being. Kristeva makes the point, in line with my own, that the failure to articulate these realms - the fact that they elude us - is what produces ideas and art, and what makes us all too human.

<sup>11</sup> The most insightful pieces of writing I have produced about these experiences are berserk and short-lived - bulletins from the brink of an episode, which have etched within them the urgency of a person using the act of mark-making, and writing, as an anchor to the lived world. A mark must have had a mark-maker in order to come into existence on the page. Mark making signifies a proof of origin, and it also acts as a task: the task of manufacturing distraction. In her paper *States of Emergency: Panic Disorder and the War on Terror*, Riley Olstead writes, 'At the moment when panic displays itself as the loss of the use of the word, as disarticulation of language - as physical incapacity to denominate or remember objects (aphasia or dysphasia) - it is the capacity of language, language as possibility of existence that we fear to lose' (Olstead).

<sup>12</sup> Theodor W. Adorno (1967) highlights Benjamin's concept that brings together the play of childhood with 'mental derangement,' writing that, 'The rebus is the model of (Benjamin's) philosophy.' The playful disorientation of the rebus and the delight in the sudden spark that ignites the mind with its solution are keys to Benjamin's concept of 'profane illumination.'

<sup>13</sup> Frampton (1983) writes that we experience ecstatic time, which is distinctly different to the historical clock time of industrial capitalism, during sleep, erotic rapture, and moments of intense emotion. This is not the orderly linear time of teleological trajectory - a monumental time - but rather a cyclical time, one of repetition, what Tamsin Lorraine calls 'a time that does not adhere to a pre-established grid, but that follows the rhythm of a sensible that goes beyond the self-contained forms of particulars or individual objects' (Tamsin Lorraine 1999: 36. See Elisabeth Grosz 1995 chapter 7 for more on Irigaray and time). Such a facet of lived time does not emerge and behave in the way that historic time does, and has consequently been theorised as feminine and named as a cosmic time, as an ecstatic time. In *A Pentagram for Conjuring the Narrative*, Frampton describes a paradigm for comprehending the world in which everything -- not only the universe, but also the greater structure of mind that apprehends it -- remains at every moment in a sort of flickering, pulsating, unstructured flux. However, within this flux there are inevitable tendencies which Frampton calls 'stable patterns of energy.'

<sup>14</sup> See Deleuze and Guattari, *What is Philosophy?* 1996: 173.

<sup>15</sup> For example, in Hitchcock's *Vertigo*, there are the wild visions of the retired police officer Scottie after he believes Madeleine has died, and in Powell & Pressburger's *A Matter of Life and Death* (aka *Stairway to Heaven*, 1946) Peter the RAF pilot endures repeated fantastical visions of time stopping, and of other worlds which, we are to understand, are the product of brain damage following an abortive parachute jump. In Roman Polanski's *Rosemary's Baby* (1968) and in Jon Schlessinger's *Midnight Cowboy* (1969) there is the drugged dream. In Nicolas

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Roeg's *Don't Look Now* (1973) there is the prophetic vision of an unwitting clairvoyant. It is Robin Williams' character that is out of focus, not the camera lens, in Woody Allen's *Deconstructing Harry* (1997). More recently, there is the unsettling denouement in *Sheitan* (Kim Chapiron. 2006). The film begins with audience participation, and the final sequence is a giddy, shape shifting, time skewing come down from a bad acid trip.

<sup>16</sup> In Antonioni's *The Red Desert* (1964), there is the story that Guillian reads to her son, which lets loose another film within the film, a free indirect discourse which leaves the viewer asking, are these Guillian's thoughts, her son's, or Antonioni's? "There's something terrible in reality and I don't know what it is," Guillian remarks, her perception, the perception of the filmmaker, and the internal seeing of the film rendered as indiscernible during her episodes of distress. Pasolini (1972) writes that in the *Red Desert* 'Antonioni... looks at the world by immersing himself in his neurotic protagonist, reanimating the facts through her eyes...to allow himself the greatest poetic freedom, a freedom which approaches - and for this it is intoxicating - the arbitrary.' As the anxiety of Guillian becomes heightened, the colour tones in the room around her alter. It is as though the film hesitates between the images serving a narrative function and detaching itself from narrative altogether, what Deleuze describes as 'a kind of shimmering effect between significance and its loss' (Deleuze 1989: 157). At one point not only the characters but also the fiction itself becomes lost in the fog, and the image, bereft of all detail and therefore of function, is returned to the real word as if arriving for the first time, a brain on the screen which is mindless, thoughtless. Antonioni writes, 'We know that beneath the represented image there is another image more true to reality, and that beneath that one, still one more, and again a further image beneath that one, until you get to the true image of reality, absolute, mysterious, that no one shall ever see. Or perhaps, one will arrive at the decomposition at any image whatsoever, of any reality whatsoever. The abstract cinema would then have its rational for existing' (Antonioni, quoted in Tinazzi. 1974: 4, re-quoted in Rohdie. 1990: 127).

<sup>17</sup> In *Mulholland Drive* the cinema is a counterfeit which threatens to envelope the character Betty, whose identity has shattered completely in order that she become the other she believes her lover will desire - the actress - who sits in the nightclub Silencio and sees the singer faint even though the recorded performance of the singing voice (another's voice) continues playing. Earlier, there had been the panic of the dark spectre (Lynch calls him 'the bum') in the dream of the man in the diner, a panic that fulfills itself as the dreamer had described, and yet finds no fulfillment as a motivated narrative element.

<sup>18</sup> The videotapes posted through the host's door are the dread of an eternal return of the surveyor as surveyed, the repressed memory of the Parisian TV talk show host, who, as a child, lied and brought about the condemning of the Algerian child refugee. There is the gap between what he knows but has not allowed himself to think (a colonial guilt) and what he is no longer able to deny in his thoughts.

<sup>19</sup> Dostoyevsky, *Notes From Underground* (Vintage reprint edition, 1994). See also Virilio (1991) *The Aesthetics of Appearance*: 33.



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<sup>20</sup> Shiv Kumar writes that duration is the 'undercurrent of human personality' (Kumar, Shiv K. *Bergson's Theory of the Novel*, in *Modern Fiction Studies* 6/4 (1960-61): 334, 325-336).

See also Paul Virilio, *The Vision Machine*, London, BFI and Bloomington IN, Indiana University Press, 1994.

<sup>21</sup> Benjamin's concept of the rebus has to do with the schizophrenic and their relation to the polymorphous world-view of childhood perceptual states. Similarly, Theodor W. Adorno describes the advantages of developing an ability, 'to render accessible by rational means that range of experience that announces itself in schizophrenia.' (Adorno, *A Portrait of Walter Benjamin*, in *Prisms*. Trans. Samuel and Shierry Weber, Cambridge, Mass. MIT Press, 1981.)

<sup>22</sup> Alan Wright, *A Wrinkle in Time*, in *Wide Angle Journal* 18.1: 47-68. Ohio University. 1996.

<sup>23</sup> Virilio describes the child in imaginative play: 'Here he is enclosed in the world of matter. It becomes immensely distinct, speechlessly obtrusive... Standing behind the doorway curtain the child becomes himself something floating and white, a ghost. The dining table under which he is crouching turns him into a wooden idol in a temple whose four pillars are the carved legs. And behind a door he is himself door, wears it as his heavy mask and as a shaman will bewitch all those who unsuspectingly enter' (Virilio 1991: 69).

<sup>24</sup> William James writes that 'The baby, assailed by eyes, ears, nose, skin, and entrails at once, feels it all as one great blooming, buzzing confusion; and to the very end of life, our location of all things in one space is due to the fact that the original extents or bignesses of all the sensations which came to our notice at once, coalesced together into one and the same space' (James [1890] 1950: 488). Researchers in cognition propose that the reason we do not have memories from before two or three years of age is because the infant brain stores and regulates perceptions and events in a system which is not compatible with the more developed brain. The infant may in fact have little or no concept of the order of events that they experience.

<sup>25</sup> Deleuze argues that 'The action-image presupposes a space in which ends, obstacles, means, subordinations, the principle and the secondary, predominances and loathings are 'distributed,' a whole space which can be called 'hodological.' But the body is initially caught in a quite different space, where disparate sets overlap and rival each other, without being able to organize themselves according to sensory-motor schemata [...]' (Deleuze 1989: 203).

<sup>26</sup> See for example a number of films included in the *Interval(1)* and *Interval(2)* screening programme, including *Like All Bad Men He Looks Attractive* (Michelle Smith), *Instructions for a Light and Sound Machine* (Peter Tscherkassky), *Birthday* (Victoria Fu).

<sup>27</sup> Christian Marazzi, *Who Killed God Pan?* in *Ephemera* on-line journal, Vol 4(3): 181-186. Trans. Taina Rajanti. 2004. [www.ephemeraweb.org](http://www.ephemeraweb.org).

<sup>28</sup> A proposed addendum to Deleuze and Guattari's series for becoming imperceptible: *becoming house*.

<sup>29</sup> Slavoj Žižek (2004), *From Purification to Subtraction: Badiou and the Real*, pg 168, in *Think Again, Alain Badiou and the future of Philosophy*, Ed. Peter Hallward.

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<sup>30</sup> Žižek, *The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity*. 2003: 67.

<sup>31</sup> Žižek in Hallward (2004): 168-172.

<sup>32</sup> Freudian analysis, notably, also looks for what has 'leaked' or fallen through from the sensible mind. If we use the psychoanalytic paradigm, then panic remains the fear of ego death, of the annihilation of self.

<sup>33</sup> Žižek in Hallward (2004): 166.

<sup>34</sup> Paolo Virno writes 'Panic fear is not the result of a rupture between the individual biography and the unipersonal powers that sustain the society, but, to the contrary it stems precisely from the magnetic adherence of the individual to the general intellect. Or rather, from an adherence that is magnetic because it lacks a spatial regulation' (Paolo Virno, *Mondanità, L'idea di mondo tra esperienza sensibile e sfera pubblica*. Roma: Manifestolibri, 1994).

<sup>35</sup> Deleuze, in his last volume, writes that 'We will say of pure immanence that it is A LIFE and nothing else. It is not immanence to life, but the immanence that is in nothing is itself a life. A life is the immanence of immanence, absolute immanence: it is complete power, complete bliss' (Deleuze [2001] *Immanence: A Life*: 60).

<sup>36</sup> Maurice Blanchot (1949) *Literature and the right to death*, in *The Work of Fire* and *The Gaze of Orpheus*.

<sup>37</sup> As Tamsin Lorraine notes that 'Deleuze and Guattari show restraint in their concept of nomadic subjectivity: a writing that is a becoming imperceptible allows one to experiment in ways that one may not be ready or brave enough to risk in the actual living of one's life' (Lorraine 1999: 236).

<sup>38</sup> Žižek in Hallward (2004): 171.

<sup>39</sup> Artaud continues, '[...] that is to say of a sort of mystery, whose fatality we could not explain' (Artaud 1972: 78)

<sup>40</sup> Between representation and not-representation, between narrative and not narrative, between schema and contingency, and also between film and not film.

<sup>41</sup> As Mary Ann Doane notes, Foucault described this as *heterotopia* and *heterochrony*, the cinema offering the spectator an immersion into other spaces and times, but also assured safe return (Doane 2002: 2). See, Michel Foucault, *Of Other Spaces* (1967) *Heterotopias*.

<sup>42</sup> Lesley Stern writes that 'The cinema [...] opens up the recognition of a peculiar kind of non-knowing, a sort of bodily aphasia, a gap which sometimes may register as a sense of dread in the pit of the stomach, or in a soaring, euphoric sensation' (Lesley Stern 1997 <http://www.accessone.com/~paradoxa>).

<sup>43</sup> 'Alterity' as a concept was developed by the philosopher Emmanuel Lèvinas. It is an ethical principle based on the face-to-face encounter with, and responsibility for, an other. Lèvinas' 1972 project: there is *affectivity* working inside of us like a kind of other force. This concept has its origin in phenomenology. This other in any person isolates what we call a self, as an opening-closing movement, what Lèvinas terms a *clignotement*.

I am in a cinema watching Robert Bresson's *A Man Escaped* (1956). It is the tortuous sequence in which the captive French resistance fighter makes his way along the roof of the prison barracks in his minutely plotted get-away. Second by pained second he steps steadily, slowly, in thick socks, carrying his shoes so as not to be heard. I adjust my sitting position in the auditorium, and am alarmed to feel my toes meeting the resistance of shoes. Wasn't I shoeless?



But, if cinema does not give us the presence of the body and cannot give us it, this is perhaps also because it sets itself a different objective; it spreads an 'experimental night' or a white space over us; it works with 'dancing seeds' and 'luminous dust'; it affects the visible with a fundamental disturbance [...] and the world with a suspension, which contradicts all natural perception. What it produces in this way is the genesis of an 'unknown body' which we have in the back of our heads, like the unthought in thought, the birth of the visible which is still hidden from view.

(Deleuze 1989: 201)

In the coupling of Bresson's film and my own physicality, the actual borders of my body and the virtual borders of the elements on the screen had conflated to form the unknown body of which Deleuze speaks, a spiritual automaton in the brain made possible by the cinema. The moving image, which so resembles thought and yet is not thought, is akin to the lived world and yet is not the lived world, produces this unknown body *with* the viewer, in the space between screen, world and thought. It makes the viewer react to the moving image as simultaneously a virtual world and an actual world. This unknown body is not the human body that has an interiority of thought, or the material body of the screen, which is outside, but a body between them, a body that is both thinking *and* screen. It forces thought to think its self, by perceiving, outside on the screen, thought-like events other than those of the brain.

Just as the novel is restricted to the white page in the bound volume, the mediations of the moving image are bound by formatting, by the film reel, the videotape, the digital timeline. Within the confines of the rectilinear screen, a film may experiment with structure and visual texture, but it must conform to the playback standardization of projection screen or monitor window if it is to be seen.<sup>1</sup> The frame is the regulatory geometry of the camera, projector and the screen, and is in fact what holds firm against the immanent possibility of erratic movement and slippage.<sup>2</sup> But we have noted that slippage into affect produces new frames with liquid edges. These fleshly boundaries are not projection zones for a self but rogue states for a life, for the unknown body does not know who it is, it only desires to

extend. When and how does the cinema bleed from the frame that seeks to contain it and extend to become embodied in the lived world? And how might our actual experience stretch its own boundaries into the realm of the cinematic?

A film or video can override sensorimotor signals from the body and from the immediate environment around that body. In *The Address of the Eye* Vivian Sobchack describes how our reaction to a film text is to continually assimilate its existence as the same as our own, and then to distance it as the unreachable experience of an other, what she calls the 'Here, Where (eye) I am' assimilated into, and then detached from the 'There, Where I am not' (Sobchack 1992: 10). The viewer veers from engrossment to estrangement and back again in a number of complex ways, at times reacting to the film text as though they are within a social transaction, holding eye contact and reacting with empathy and intuitive physical counter-action, and at other times perceiving the film as a dead object, one that can at best stimulate, and at worst fades into the background amongst other sensory noise. We see the puppet and the puppet's strings, the top-down and bottom-up equation, but for the most part we choose not to concentrate on the strings. Even when the movements of cinema are fantastic, we still opt to react to them 'as if real' (Richard Dyer 1994: 7-10<sup>3</sup>), what Sobchack describes as the cinema's 'eidetic given-ness' to experience.<sup>4</sup> During any cinema situation this bodily and cognitive confusion spasms and swirls in the back of our heads, excitedly and with distress. Our body is halved as it is doubled, put to sleep and yet augmented, as we 'feel the movement as well as see the moved' (Sobchack 1992: 10<sup>5</sup>). The cinema gives us perception by using perception; it shows us life by living a life. In fact, without some (albeit sublimated) awareness of the film performing its *filmliness*, no film object could make any sense at all. This defies the entire argument of structural materialist film by stating that any moving image is intuitively received as that, concurrent to its reception as a meaning system. Sobchack makes this point in a footnote,

What is suggested here is that even at its most abstract and materially reflexive, the cinema is not understood as *merely* its brute material unless it is *secondarily* coded as such. Thus, in 'structural-materialist' films, the materiality of the film is, and must be,

*signified* in order to be understood on a material basis. In sum, the young infant (not yet communicatively competent because only preconscious of its own production of vision as both a viewing view/moving image) sees the play of light and shadow and colour of *any* film as only its brute materiality, whereas the communicatively competent, self-conscious viewer sees no film in that manner, unless it is secondarily coded as materially significant. That is, to the baby the film is not yet a film, but to the mature viewing subject, the film is always *more* than its material presence and play before it can be seen as anything *less*.

(Sobchack 1992: 6, footnote 6<sup>6</sup>)

An image: of tall seats in front, and an iridescent plane, seemingly stretching further up and across than my vision can encompass, with overwhelming sound, and distorted shapes; perhaps these are animals. This is my first memory of the cinema - a Disney animation - I think it may have been *The Jungle Book* (Wolfgang Reitherman 1967). As non-infants, we know that the cinema's *wild meaning* (Merleau-Ponty's term for undifferentiated significance in lived experience, prior to reflection) is there, we simply allow it to remain under resourced. Perhaps, as Sobchack argues, it is not so much that we ever really lose our selves at the movies than that we find another body, one, I would suggest, that each viewer always acknowledges, without yet necessarily feeling confident to enter into greater intimacy with. Sobchack adds that 'we discover the film's body as "inhuman" much as we discover our own: when it troubles us or when we look at its parts on a dissecting table' (Sobchack 1992: 220). Like the dual controls of a learner car, the cinema takes a hold of our bodies in momentum, as though braking, from nowhere, but then our own bodies assert force and agency back against the vehicle around us.

In *Circles of Confusion*, Hollis Frampton gives the example of a scratch on a projected celluloid film print appearing in front of Lana Turner's face (Frampton 1983: 196). In this instant, Frampton argues, the film momentarily becomes more to do with the scratch than the character or the actress. Moreover, this event can be about the scratch *and* the character, an event that reveals protagonist, performer, image, image method and image recipient, each vying for dominance. But rather than attempting to separate each component out and make it discrete in order to establish a hierarchy where one is above or below the

other, there is the possibility for compositing a new creature, one which, although not commonly recognized, has always been there. When a boom microphone drops into shot, at least three realms are operating concurrently: the story world, the world of the cast and crew, and the world of the audience watching. Such an embodied aspect of the cinematic transaction generates pleasurable and un-pleasurable lapses (recall the juddering print of the Coen Brothers' *The Ladykillers* recounted in Scene 3<sup>7</sup>) but also produces new fingers, new eyes and new touches - touches that tentatively make forays into different worlds. Unknown bodies gather together around such errors. This is where the cinema begins to contravene its own system and enter the real, and where the mind experiments with the threshold of the physical possibility of the human body.

Since the industrial revolution there has been a paradigm shift in the extension of our sense perception and physical capability. The telephone, the phonogram, the cinematograph, the automobile, train, aeroplane and rocket, the television and analogue video, real time live broadcast, satellite images, cellular phones and instant messaging, the computer, hypertext and the internet, virtual reality, digital video, DVDs and podcasts, each of these inventions has prompted behavioural changes, enhancements to our possibility that we cannot yet quantify, nor give adequate analysis to. Like any other machines, the camera, the edit suite and the projector (whether analogue or digital), work as extensions of our own physical possibility. Sobchack writes that all machines are necessarily human-like in order to function as prostheses (Sobchack 1992: 184-186). Dziga Vertov went so far as to imagine the voice of the machine spokesperson for such a human extensivity:

I, a machine, am showing you a world, the likes of which only I can see. I free myself today and forever from human immobility, I am in constant movement, I approach and draw away from objects, I crawl under them, I move alongside the mouth of a running horse, I cut into a crowd at full speed, I run in front of running soldiers, I turn on my back, I rise with an airplane, I fall and soar together with falling and soaring bodies [...] My road is towards the creation of a fresh perception of the world. Thus I decipher in a new way the world unknown to you.

(Vertov, quoted in Sobchack 1992: 184)



This confusion and conflation of bodies, then, between the mediated moving image and the lived world, has many manifestations, and it might be useful now to attempt another taxonomy of the situations or spaces where this conflation can occur. In the first century of the cinema, filmmakers, irrespective of their aesthetic or political sensibility, explored the physical limits of the medium, and used the medium to elicit physical responses in the audience. The action-image provides exhilaration, the zenith of which is the spectacle of cinemascope and the IMAX. We have already noted the *oneiric* confusion the moving image on the screen elicits, where it is possible to wear shoes and yet at the same time be shoeless, where the sequence of eating can make one hungry, the sequence of pornography can make one aroused (indeed, some of the earliest moving images were designed to titillate), the first-person sequence of a car chase on screen can make the viewer's body sway from side to side, and yet the image of a gun raised and pointed cannot produce the sensation of danger, only a pale empathetic response. Roman Polanski constructed a shot in *Rosemary's Baby* (1968) where John Cassavetes' character makes a secretive telephone call, half-observed by the bedroom doorframe. As his body moves further left behind the frame and out of view (of Rosemary), the audience leans collectively to their right to try to see around the obstruction. But the obstruction is two dimensional, not three-dimensional. An on-screen interaction can prompt contextually appropriate emotional and physical responses, as the audience acts-in to the context of the teleplay and its environs, crying, feeling hunger, desire, fear, boredom and repulsion. In *Misery* (Rob Reiner 1990), watching the dramatization of limbs being broken creates sensations in the same parts of our own bodies; the giddy swirling camera around the tip of the Empire State building in *King Kong* (Peter Jackson 2005) produces an arresting and vertiginous feeling. It is almost as though we feel about to fall. What keeps us from falling is not only the knowledge of the screen and the auditorium; it is also the fact that when watching a film we can *see* the seeing and *hear* the hearing (Sobchack 1992<sup>8</sup>). And yet the distraction of an actual baby crying in the auditorium can rob the film text of all its persuasions.

Rejecting the sensations and manipulations of narrative, the avant-garde produced tactile relations through direct contact with the material of film and of videotape. Stan Brakhage hand painted on individual frames, making rapid flickering sequences such as *Mothlight* (1963). Fluxus video artists created feedback loops, some designed to produce trance states, others to use minimalism, formalism and reflexivity to generate abstract thought. A recent silent film by Peter Miller, *Projector Obscura* (2005), makes a reverse engineering of the cinema, moving it backwards, up-turned, on its head and hands. He modifies the film projector to act as a camera, and runs unexposed celluloid through it. The light from the auditorium falls onto the film and we become privy to the cinematographic infant, staring into the mirror. Curtains part and close again; a succession of white screen rectangles shimmers, without image. Perhaps this subtle yet illuminating film would be best screened in a camera.

There is the sculptural opening out of the moving image into the space around it, advanced in the multiple projections of the proponents of expanded cinema. Underground filmmakers and expanded cineastes more directly engage with their audiences, their films often transgressing the screen, coming close to live performances. Beyond the control of the artist or the film director is the vibrant physicality of the screening space common to an underground film screening, where the film must vie for attention and stand shoulder to shoulder with other films. There, errors result from DIY sensibilities and constraints - the sound or image may be bad, the film often starts and is started again, there is no raked seating, the audience interrupts and asserts the presence of their own bodies. Because the rarefied space of the cinema auditorium and of the gallery is not observed, the film text performs differently, taking on new attributes. Alcohol and the moving image co-mingle, tiredness and discomfort inform the image and the residual spirit of the carnival makes the nature of the gaze differently attentive. Aggressive and explicit films, rapid-fire films, comedies, scratch videos, filmed rants, succeed there, where narratives would fail. In fact, greater privilege is often afforded to the viewer and the space than the film text.

Installation artists create moving image environments for sensory immersion, offering temporal flux, the monitor is upturned, immersed in water, the image is thrown onto bodies and objects, the film print loops and presents its own degeneration. In Gary Hill's *Tall Ships* (1992), projected figures walk up to meet the viewer in the corridor of a gallery, growing in size, until they are level, and then turning to walk away, doubling as image and social encounter with a stranger. They do not speak or present themselves as characters; they merely pace the ebb and flow of our engagement with the phantasmagorical properties of the medium. The camera is moved around a semi-circular frame and the image made giddy in Tony Hill's *Downside Up* (1985), strapped to a plank of wood in order to be thrown and spun in Hill's *Holding the Viewer* (1993). *I'm Not The Girl Who Misses Much* (1986) by Pipilotti Rist thrusts the artist into fast forward much in the same way as the character in *Of Camera*. In the gallery we are increasingly seeing cinematic appropriation where before that vernacular was treated as adversarial - using scale, modified projection, directional sound and lighting, and many other cues appropriated from the cinema, but foregoing narrative, targeting the thinking body of the visitor to the space, who, significantly, is mobile and free to enter and leave. Douglas Gordon slows Hitchcock to the duration of a day in *24-hour Psycho* (1993); Tacita Dean's installation *Foley Artist* (1996) peers behind the curtain of the moving image/sound relationship by making visible those who live record micro sounds which are not contiguous to the film shoot, but act to enhance the image.<sup>9</sup> The sheer scale of the image in the installation - immense and minute - supplants the cinematic movements of pans and zooms and offers the fleshly dialogue of which Sobchack speaks. Virtual reality game designers extend the physicality of our eyes, hands and legs into a multi-dimensional graphic realm where we meet with other avatars, although thus far its narratives only crudely imitate the order of commercial cinema.

The unknown body surfaces and stretches its limbs in all of these outcomes, resisting containment by sign systems, or being caged in by plot and made sensible by our own comprehension. Although produced for what the philosopher and post-phenomenologist Don

Ihde describes as 'the terminus that is the lived world of *the human*' (Ihde, quoted in Sobchack 1992: 187<sup>10</sup>) the cinematic prosthesis never fully takes to the human body. This is because both the cinema and the human being are at origin contingent centres, whose perceptions and actions are not instantaneous but rather divided by the continual series of (predominantly) imperceptible intervals. Every mind perceptually divides and distends time, just as every camera mechanically does so. A celluloid film depends on marrying that which is least contingent in its physicality to that which is least contingent in our own, uniting human mental perceptual gaps and persistence of vision to the shutter blade in the film projector or the interlaced over scan in the video image. A film's body is therefore partly human and partly inhuman, just as the viewer's body is partly synthesized with the mechanical and partly with a virtual that is on the outside. In the classical operation the cinema's body is always intentional, centered, and self-displacing. Classical cinema seeks only to bear out our customary thoughts, our commonsensical spatial organization, the movement-image looking to the methods of the body and the mind of the viewer for guides and points of contact, and then grafting onto them its own body and mind.<sup>11</sup>

In fact, the classical narrative involves a cluster of bodies that when combined produce an animate and apparently sentient creature, which we regard as the film. We can give such a cinema the taxonomy of seven bodies, although not one of them is distinct or discrete. These bodies are: the body of the film shoot (the pre-filmic); the bodies of the performers and the filmed spaces (the pro-filmic); the body of the film's diegetic telling (its narrative sense and the levels of its narration, the mise-en-scène, the score, the shot and reverse shot, and so on); the body of the film's assemblage (its suturing, the dissolves, superimpositions); the body of the film in the gate (the final film or video object and how it performs during the event of its exhibition); the body of the theatrical space (the site for our sight); and the body of the viewer (regardless of whether she or he is engaged or disengaged). When these bodies are maintained by the established system of proper relations they appear as regulated and sensible, each of their corporeal existences sufficiently combined and

contained. In fact, the majority of cinema seeks to take away our bodies and de-limit our minds, supplanting them with a surrogate organism.<sup>12</sup> The transaction of this cinema comes complete with its own persuasive intelligibility; lucidity is assumed by viewer and by filmmaker - the pact of our cinematic communicative competence.

But there is a pre-linguistic sense to this apparatus. The radical and aberrant cinema of which we are speaking is an indeterminate rather than determinate system. It directs itself towards a berserk body that cannot live outside of the possibility of thought, and further, towards the a-centred non-Euclidean brain we are increasingly becoming acquainted with, a brain that continually encounters and leaps across momentary cerebral deaths. Stripped of the imposition of a precarious language, the existent terms of the cinematic proper are revealed as limbs without *pro-prioception*, a term the neuro-psychiatrist Oliver Sacks uses for the way a body operates in relation to itself. In *A Leg to Stand On* (1998), Sacks describes how trauma can temporarily or permanently destabilize pro-prioceptive body geography, so that, for example, the victim can no longer orient one part of his or her body in relation to another without the visual aid of a mirror. Imagine now such a cinema. Every film is this. The moving image is at origin uttered wildly before it articulates with specificity, just as the 'introceptive' image we maintain of our own bodies is more than that which we see reflected in a mirror (Sobchack 1992: 12). The body of the screen and the camera are the most articulate elements of the cinematic process, their limbs more present and robust than those of the performers, the film stock, or the camera operator; they articulate 'fleshly boundaries' (Sobchack 1992: 210). But before suture and other methods saved cinema from itself, plugging all of the wounds that might have bled and exposed the bodies of the cast and crew and so on; before fragmentation and dissection by theoretical analysis, the moving image gave another sense to us, through the features of its uncommon physical and virtual being.<sup>13</sup> Beneath legitimization through a cinematic proper, the moving image is and has always been a *rogue* body. Give cinema a body then, but do not think that the moving image is nature. The cinema is not nature; it is nature's excess, a graft that extends our movements of thought but also produces an allergic

reaction. And the fact that the moving image as prosthesis does not take to our own bodies but instead produces an unknown body is of benefit to experience.



*Auditorium* (Eastwood 1999/2002)

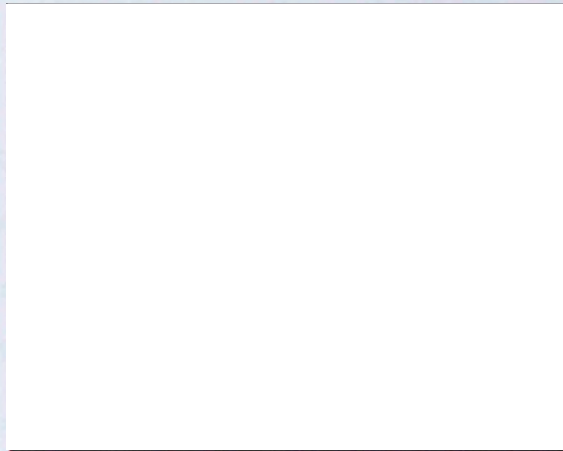
Long-haul Avid video editors experience a phenomenon known as *interfacing*, where the temporality of the non-linear time-line presents itself to the mind of the edit suite operator as a concurrent system. Exhausted editors become so immersed in the reality of cutting and pasting portions of mediated time that their own reality begins to take on similar attributes. They find themselves attempting to slow and reverse traffic on their journey home, or copy and paste lost sections of conversation, in an oneiric configuration produced by a mind that wants to join actuality with video or film. In *playback*, we make our own modifications - Dvd extras offer alternate endings; fast forward, pause and reverse produces new temporal engagement.<sup>14</sup> A feature film may be watched at double speed or in installments over the duration of days or months. *The Longest Most Meaningless Movie in the World* (Vincent Patouillard 1970) runs to 48 hours, a plot-less stream of found footage, only ever "screened" once. At the premiere of *Battleship Potemkin* (1925) Serge Eisenstein was still editing the second reel as the first reel was being projected. Students of Vertov were quite commonly instructed to shoot practice films without stock in the camera: the cinema as a frame, an opening. Abbas Kiarostami treats his car as his office, the place where he conceives of most of his films, staring out through the rectilinear frame of the windscreen and finding: the cinema. A gap between two buildings presents itself as cinemascope; a streetlight becomes equal to the pending arrival of a character. During a visit to the camera obscura in Edinburgh I watched as the demonstrator dropped a piece of white paper on the circular table and then

*lifted up* a red double-decker bus as its refracted image passed across the paper surface. On the video recording of the duration of the 1999 total eclipse of the sun, I captured one of my friends saying 'It's like the lights going down in the cinema.' I named the tape *Auditorium*. These lived situations are scenes from the three-year long film, which unfortunately became lost in the post(production) and was never delivered. The three-year long film may have been a linguistic slip, but like the event of cinema's inception itself, it opened up a new possibility within the mind. First the nooshock of the moving image, then a secondary nooshock: the aberrant moving image as an uncommon way of thinking. Thirdly, the nooshock of a film that is the world we live in.

Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller's *In Real Time* (1999<sup>15</sup>) has participants navigating a route through a building with the aid of a small video camera. The camera's flip-out screen plays back a previously recorded video image of the same environment, creating a live and embodied 'mix' of actual events and video occurrence, in which the digital moving image sometimes resembles and at other times clashes with what the eye is concurrently seeing around its frame. Details within the recording and within the actual environment slip into accord, so that the real appears to offer synchronous services to the mediated, and vice-versa. Cardiff comments that 'the aspect of having to follow the video image and the real world image is very disorienting and makes the brain start to flip reality for fiction and the video for reality.'<sup>16</sup> Cardiff and Bures Miller's work is essentially spectacular in its objective and not as removed as it might seem from the stimulation of the action-image. In the 1950s, commercial cinemas in America conducted similar experiments, mildly electrifying seats, causing smells to emanate at key moments in the film drama, and placing actors in the auditorium who would grab at the shoulders of viewers during horror films. And we know that the early cinema lifted greatly from the trick lighting and mirror work of magic lanterns shows, fake séances, and so on. But Cardiff and Bures Miller take dramatic narratives off the screen into the auditorium, and out, onto the streets, where they exist in a new frame and more forcefully occupy our own physical space. *The Paradise Institute* (2001) creates what



Cardiff refers to as a 'cinema simulator' replicating the whole experience of the cinema. A heavily worked soundtrack accompanying a projected image features modifications to the sync sound. Viewers hear talking from the aisle behind them, a woman commenting on the film and answering her mobile phone, background noise in the balcony.



*The Paradise Institute* (2001)  
Janet Cardiff & George Bures Miller

Cardiff's *The Missing Voice (Case Study B)* (1999) is an audio walk through the warehouse district and the financial area of east London that uses binaural sound to create an acoustic frame for the participant wearing the headphones, so that every image and scenario on the walk presents itself as cinematic. The recorded story melds with the narratives of the actual as the participant, guided by Cardiff's complicit directions, embarks on a pre-ordained derive. 'With the audio walks I want people to be inside the filmic experience and have the real physical world as the constantly changing visuals of the screen' (ibid<sup>17</sup>). Each of these expanded video projects provide a disembodied thrill for the participant much in the same way that a 3D movie or a virtual reality game does. Clearly this is part of the intention of the work, to use the tropes of the cinema (the sound of distant gun shots, helicopters landing, dramatic violins, the whispered tones of the noir narrator), and certainly the social space is radically transformed by the intervention, making of human perambulation a continual Steadicam following shot, and causing minor occurrences within the locale to flare up, become more than themselves, and enter into a frisson with the fictive.<sup>18</sup> During the oneiric experience of tape and world in *The Missing Voice* and *In Real Time*, the swirling confusion



between the intra-subjective and inter-subjective creates an affection image, where the film and the viewer enter into a molecular becoming, each now reversible, reverse engineered. Temporarily, the cloak of the cinema is everywhere and covering everything, like Borges' map; not a physical body, as we know, but a way of re-embodiment space. It is a new body in thought.

As Artaud writes, the cinema 'does not separate itself from life but returns to the primitive order of things' (Artaud 1972: 21). Artaud's BwO is the wild meaning of cinema, haptically cradled as an embodied vision that veers between attention and inattention, and between attraction and repulsion. This BwO cannot come to life because it is inorganic, a life and a living which exceeds the inadequate possibilities of human existence. He writes, 'Man is sick because he is badly constructed' (Artaud 1982: 79<sup>19</sup>). The body without organs thrusts the actual lived body beyond its physical possibility, towards its impossibility. Such a BwO finds a becoming in the irrational arrangements of shots in series. These series provoke the neuro-physical vibrations Artaud so hoped the cinema would generate. The automaton produced by these fissures 'does not form a whole, but rather a limit, a membrane which puts an outside and an inside in contact, makes them present to each other, confronts them or makes them clash' (Deleuze 1989: 206). Constructed by cinematic images, this body breaks from cliché and roams in the lived world, where its participation is disorderly and absurd, a remake of the body now severed from representations, and therefore return to the body's real flesh, itself but a gap through which intensities can flow and be felt. Artaud thinks that the cinema has nothing to do with the lived world, and this is why, he believes, it brings to life an unknown body within us. It frees our virtual body to stretch and be ludicrous. 'Give me a body then,' writes Deleuze, 'this is the formula of philosophical reversal. The body is no longer the obstacle that separates thought from itself, that which it has overcome to reach thinking. It is on the contrary that which thought plunges into or must plunge into, in order to reach the unthought, that is life. Not that the body thinks, but, obstinate and stubborn, it forces us to think, and forces us to think what is concealed from thought, life' (Deleuze 1989: 189).

Cinema, for both Artaud and Deleuze, will produce images that dismember representation and break with the physical and conceptual boundaries of our bodies and our world. The body without organs is a figure of dissemination and disorganization, in willful suspense from the schemas of behaviour it receives from its own biological (over)-determination. It is a possibility, a will, a life *we will be*, rather than the life we have and live. Deleuze develops Artaud's ideas into what he terms another thinker in thought, where the brain, like Artaud's conception of the body, *is* the gap. This cinema gives to the brain images that cannot be thoughts.

Just as Artaud's *Theatre of Cruelty* had no desire to speak for the human, a cinema which moves to exceed itself has no desire to represent or reproduce the body, mind or experience of a woman or of a man, but rather seeks to construct a new body, one which defies the arrangement of the cinema organism in its combinatory meaning (bodies arranged like legs holding up a table) and the fixity of its execution. This absurd cinema emerges in the gap between body, language and thought. It moves between a virtual cinema only possible in thought and a cinema where the film's body tries to give itself to exteriority, 'to give itself in a space-time without end' (Irigaray 1993: 64, quoted in Lorraine 1999: 36). This is how Irigaray counters a masculine motivation towards transcendence. We may interpret in this a film which achieves an outside in order to make touch between this exterior and its own interior, and *now*, in the present tense of its emergence *as* a film. This BwO is a virtual film, where the cinema is an imaginary that can be projected onto or misrecognised in the lived world. So, a physically challenging moving image then, which begins to find embodiment beyond the confines of its frame - a behavioural cinema, of action (filmmaking), and a cinema of *pataphysics*<sup>20</sup> suggested to us as a virtual, as a thought without a body or a world. The cinema that we are now imagining is precisely that, an imaginary, a thought that draws energy from, explores and exploits the gap between the fabrication and unreality of the film, and the lived world. A Cinema into the Real performs two questions: what is the lived situation of a film, and what is the mediated situation of the lived world? Like Artaud's plan for remaking the

body (by returning to the body), this practice, of a cinema into the real, reconstitutes a cinematic body that was taken away from us. This involves the classical cinema's torso losing its physical limbs in order to acquire its virtual ones and exercise its anarchic body without organs. And on this Deleuze writes,

A flickering brain, which re-links or creates loops - this is cinema... Everything can be used as a screen, the body of a protagonist or even the bodies of the spectators; everything can replace the film stock, in a virtual film which now only goes on in the head, behind the pupils, with sound sources taken as required from the auditorium. A disturbed brain-death or a new brain which would be at once the screen, the film stock and the camera, each time membrane of the outside and the inside?

(Deleuze 1989: 215)



*Cinema into the Real, Test 1 (2001)*

A conversation at a café table is covertly recorded and the words and actions of the speakers are transcribed into a film script. The participants watch the videotape, learn their lines, and re-perform their exchange at the same café location, first unannounced, and then later within a film set, a performed series of live *takes* in a shoot without cameras. Micro conversations at adjacent tables around the set become implicated as potential cinematic material.

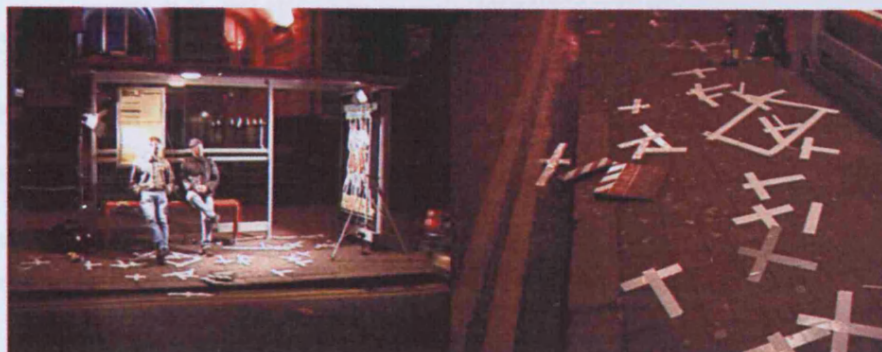
There are similarities between being immersed in the theatre of the classical narrative film space and absorbed in a lived social experience, but there are also profound differences. In a classical film, nothing is extraneous, and in the lived world, everything is extraneous. One is, customarily, a captive space, a place framed, where portions of time are broken up as takes and edits; the other is supposedly frameless. In *Cinema into the Real, Test 1* a table in a busy café has a camera and radio microphones trained upon it. A sign placed on the table reads, 'If you sit here, you will be recorded.' Over a period of days public conversations at that table were videotaped and a nine-minute section of one particular exchange was selected and transcribed into a film script, word-for-word and action-for-action. Nick and Kelly, the two

people involved, had not seen each other for a year, and their discussion was therefore polite but restrained. The banality and awkwardness of this made its way into the script. For a number of weeks, the two protagonists (neither of whom were trained in performing) rehearsed their way back to the original exchange, to the point of the *doing* of the conversation. Reading the transcription or watching the videotape document, it is clear that both are occupying roles and engaging in fixed patterns of social etiquette. Their bodies and their words give and they take. During rehearsal however, the more familiar the two became with the text and with each other, the further they deviated from the stilted nature of their original conversation, replacing it (improving it) with the stylised performativity we are conditioned to think is real from watching films. Both were seeking to be *flattering* on camera, fearing that the outcome would be boring if they were not, and in fact the majority of the direction I gave them was to be flatter. It is this very element - the banal, and its relation to the assumed cinematic - that formed the locus of their encounter, and the focus of the piece, for what is strikingly evident is how the presence of an other (in this case two others, the person on the other side of the table, and the other of the hidden camera) introduces new frames which can either prohibit or enhance the character, disposition and unfolding narrative of the subject. To have objectives, expectations, desires, is to frame a life not yet lived, and we characterise ourselves in order to make actual those stories of ourselves. This cinema intervention gave to Nick and to Kelly a sense of themselves and each other as elements of a scene, on videotape, to come.

At the end of the rehearsal period, the two returned to the cafe and the same table and, in an unannounced and one-off intervention, re-performed a duplicate of the nine-minute conversation. The conversation was then re-presented at a public event, now taking the form of a series of *takes* under film lights and a boom microphone in a film shoot without cameras. Whenever the performance deviated significantly from the script, the filmmaker entered the set and announced a cut with a clapperboard. Take-for-take, the conversation was worked through. Finally, it was performed in one long take, with a live score. The audience and cafe-



goers were able to refer to the video recording of the original conversation on a monitor in the corner of the space. Everyday activities around the set became implicated in the work, so much so that several audience members approached me afterwards and explained how the performance had made them aware that the conversations at their own table were also potential film(ed) material.



*Cinema into the Real, Test 3: Scoring Belfast (2002<sup>21</sup>)*

A film is a stage with received conventions, both in terms of its production and its exhibition. There is a normative form of conduct for the film set, and there are normative expectations that members of the public encountering the set, and participants within the set, have of the film that is being made. This expectation is related to the imaginary event of seeing the film later, and also to the received hierarchies of creative, economic and organizational power that determine the conduct of those on or around the set. Fiction film production involves the marking out of scripted social space and acted behaviour so that it corresponds to camera and lighting set ups. Taped marks secure the positions of performers, objects, lights and camera, so that composition is formed and maintained, and continuity observed. The camera and sound teams, along with the performers, fence themselves into corners around cabling and lighting positions, extra-diegetic bodies, a surplus that need not be regarded as waste. In the shoot there is the complex mapping of space through taped positions, and endlessly revised geometries of continuity, of "not crossing the line." These intricate maps or choreographies, ordinarily floor or street based, provide a template for behaviour and action; both actors and crew members develop considerable skill in either

hitting or moving around these marks. The appearance of film production apparatus gives significance to everyday contexts; it changes them. In *Cinema into the Real, Test 3*, lights for a film shoot were erected at a bus stop at the end of a Saturday afternoon in the busy Belfast city centre. Every few minutes a passing car pulled up in front of the bus stop, its stereo playing evocative cinema score phrases, the sound of which triggered film lights positioned either side of the stop. Violins sound. A light creates a glow on the face of a bystander then fades. By placing a cinematic frame such as this, over an everyday context, ordinary public occurrences become implicated in a classical cinema narrative mode. Over a period of two hours a wide range of the Belfast community became active in the intervention. Each time the car drove away and the sound faded over distance, the lights faded also.

The transient public became inquisitive or self-conscious before what they assumed to be an unseen camera. Engagement or reaction varied. Some bystanders tried to speak to the car driver, who adopted the tactic of looking the other way (an action that served to add to the *film noir* quality of the intervention). Others kept out of the scene, preferring to watch, waiting for what they expected to be the imminent arrival of actors. Many adopted new behaviour for the accompanying music, now their own personal theme. One elderly woman spiritedly requested wardrobe and make-up. Between each pass of the car, or each take, I would enter the set, as the filmmaker, and mark with tape the foot positions and shopping bags of the people waiting. When asked what film was being made I replied, "A film without a camera". I added that I was marking their positions so that I knew where they would be. By the end of the two-hour duration there remained an expanse of fifty or more position marks, the topography of where each person had been, the mapping of an everyday choreography. I placed these marks within a social context to make pointers towards an immanent film that appeared to be coming, and to pose questions about that other choreography, the social script, and whether this is a methodology for thinking about our conduct as social beings that we find instructive. The marks signify disorder as much as order, the failed attempts to direct lives, only a motif, their function having nothing to do with authored choreography and

everything to do with the chaotic and contingent modes of social behaviour, and with the lay expectations we have of the mediums we call the cinema or television. Where exactly was the film team who would surround and make us of these marked positions? Nowhere but in my own mind and the minds of those waiting, on the set.

Sobchack writes that the viewer 'shares cinematic space with the film but must also negotiate it, contribute to and perform the constitution of its experiential significance' (Sobchack 1992: 10). The competence and literacy of the film watching public was co-opted, and directed, in order to form a novel cine text: the inventive and imaginative space of the image of oneself, in the world, as a film. In *Test 4*, lights for a film shoot are erected at a tram stop in central Zagreb. Members of the public become caught up in film scenes, actors drafted into a virtual film, as the lights illuminate the area and a musical phrase from a cinema score, seemingly without source, becomes amplified. One young couple purposefully traveled to the site to perform a kissing scene. When asked what film was being made, this time I answered, "A film which is always and everywhere." Some members of the public commented that they were waiting expectantly for the arrival of film or television stars. These passers-by made sense of what they were seeing as *cinema*, as the composite of all they understand cinema to be. Most notably, there were the travelers, people performing their selves, as nomadic. A station is a place of arriving and departing and this is a particularly rich narrative; it is the very essence of narrative, if we follow the concept of the mythological hero's journey from Vladimir Propp and the Structuralists. When in transit we are selves in transition, outside of the precepts of familiarity. We are differently social. Cinema has used the *Candide*, the innocent abroad, as a staple story structure since its inception: the western, the road movie, the meeting of strangers at stations and airports. These places are where drama is permissible, as public, where there is room, in the liminal space - the any-space-whatever - to explore uncommon facets of our characters. In this film, which is the lived world, people are variously good and bad at playing themselves. What is a film if it is not the world?

So, not only the film itself, but the film shoot, the film edit, the film as an idea - the cinema is an aspect of experience, an aspect of language. The film shoot forecloses its vicinity as implicated in another order, the environment *which-will-be-represented*. In pulling cinema into a real and ostensibly unmediated context, such a cinema as this attempts to locate the lived world as an elaborate, covert theatre of multiple and continually revised fictions. This film *is* always and everywhere. This film is unfinished, because to finish a film is to let the swell of its thought become sediment. The finished film object is what Žižek calls the 'post-evental forcing of the real' (Žižek, in Hallward 2004<sup>22</sup>) which in this case is the forcing of the unnamable contingency which is thinking film into the *as if filmed* film object. Badiou insists that the unnamable real be respected by not making 'as if' assertions about it. This is why there is a largely untapped potential in revisiting films, and why each of the films I produce is the progenitor of the next.<sup>23</sup> Films speak across each other; they change in their performance in relation to one another, and each audience changes them. Films are more powerful as ideas, or as incidents and events, than as discrete distributable objects. The idea can do anything; it is the organism and the object that are crude constraints, whose most promising attributes are their very fleshliness.

The cinema transforms our organism because it is without a centre, and therefore connects to the dispersed centre latent within the human being - the meeting of nowhere with anywhere. Deleuze observes that 'there is an absolute contact between (the) non-totalizable, asymmetrical outside and inside [...] in which the skin of the film and the brain (of the audience members) are in absolute contact, physically, emotionally and psychologically' (Deleuze 1989: 278). But in essence this philosophy is anti-phenomenology, a rejection of the romantic return to the child as a centre who has not yet been divided into a subject (a subject who is the object of an other), in favour of the gap between. Sobchack's phenomenological argument is that the cinema articulates lived experience by using and modifying lived experience, which is not the case in painting or photography, or even in the theatre: a film has sense at the same time that it produces sense. According to Deleuze's reading, existential



phenomenology privileges a 'natural perception' at odds with cinematic signification. He sees the cinema as a problem for phenomenology because it can 'with impunity, bring us close to things or take us away from them and revolve around them, and it suppresses both the anchoring of the subject and the horizon of the world. Hence it substitutes an implicit knowledge and a second intentionality for the conditions of natural perception' (Deleuze 1986: 57). Sobchack claims that Deleuze misses the dialectical and dialogic character of Merleau-Ponty's later semiotic phenomenology while he moves on to assert (phenomenologically) the direct and preverbal significance of cinematic movement and images.<sup>24</sup> Deleuze, however, neglects the embodied situation of the spectator and of the film. What is missing from Deleuze's theory of cinema is the very rhizome of its practice: shooting, re-shooting, editing.

My brain seizes-up, it contracts, it feels tight. I struggle to jump from the brain into a thought, a recollection thought, of ideas for cinema beyond physicality, not transcendent, but already here. The thought suffocates in a vacuum - what ideas *can* I have for a cinema beyond physicality? I am distracted by social exchanges around me, by my awkward seating position, and I cannot find an opening in my ideation. I think of an empty page as a gap, a cinema-less cinema. I become reminded of the line of flight that a cinema into the real travels along: to think and conduct one's self towards a cinema that is not (yet) possible; to make a film that enters and becomes indiscernible from the lived world it was previously registered as other than. This is a film to come. If we follow this line of thought we find ourselves caught up in the waveform of a film forever being made and remade, and this is not sensible. This is a porous film, continually uprising and disappearing; at times indistinguishable from the world it intervenes in. Its body bleeds. This film invites participation, causes distress and falls down, in front of us. It is immanence, *a life* lived towards a fluid film situation, the will to falsehood.

These are powers of thought for an emergent cinematic body, always attempting to break the physical law of its own media and be solely idea, an unknown body which is the actual *and* the cinematic, an emergent poetics, a force from the outside. This film is the antagonism and reversibility between various terms: top-down/bottom-up perception, actual and virtual, perception and expression, film that is being made and film that is being watched (the two present tenses). We have traveled from the schema of the movement-image and of the sensory-motor schema, through the rupture of these schemas in the time-image, and the expansion of the cinema's body along a flight line of desire to make physical contact with its own exterior. We have discussed the normative and aberrant ways in which the cinema viewer lose their selves in the image, in the dark, and the new thoughts which can emerge when the voids produced by the cinema are not rescued by narrative. Now it is time to give our thoughts to the cinema as a means to go out into the world. Film wants to return to the lived world, like the shards of metal from the sword still embedded in the body of the gashed ship's dog, out to sea thousands of miles from the weapon, in Umberto Eco's *The Island of the Day Before* (Eco 1995). Film bleeds and retains the register of the originating wound, which, in classical cinema must be stitched closed, constricted into (the illusion of) a Whole. But the film wants to go home to the lived world that is not virtual. The intention of any film is always towards a result that is in excess of its own virtual state, and in excess of the actual - an act of filmmaking that makes of itself a film that was made and *is being made*. This, then, is to overlook the cinema in order to *filmmake*. The film becomes a void. Do not finish the film. This is the rhizome of filmmaking - an interval experience in itself. This practice, of thinking within the task (the task being to open onto the actual through filmmaking), puts the cinema back into the lived world, as a thought. It returns the rogue body of cinema to the real, where it can roam free, meaningless and untamed, here and now, right away, made as it is thought.

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<sup>1</sup> Michelle Smith works so physically with found celluloid - cutting and sticking multiple items in the same composition - that the final objects cannot be projected, and must be digitally scanned frame by frame, in order to be seen. See, [www.wovenfilms.com](http://www.wovenfilms.com). Peter Tscherkassky similarly has an extremely tactile relationship to film as material.

<sup>2</sup> Sobchack has noted that 'Three metaphors have dominated film theory: the *picture frame*, the *window*, and the *mirror*. The first two, the frame and the window, represent the opposing poles of classical film theory, while the third, the mirror, represents the synaesthetic conflation of perception and expression that characterizes most contemporary film theory. What is interesting to note is that all three metaphors relate directly to the screen rectangle and to the film as a static *viewed object*, and only indirectly to the dynamic activity of viewing that is engaged in by both the film and the spectator, each as *viewing subjects*' (Sobchack 1992: 14-15).

<sup>3</sup> See Richard Dyer, *Action! in Sight and Sound*, no.10 Oct 1994: 7-10.

<sup>4</sup> See Sobchack 2000: 58. Sobchack argues, however, that this given-ness is in the same instance destabilised by the acknowledgement of likeness to the lived world (something I will come to in the second part of the thesis).

<sup>5</sup> On the subject of our physical relation to the image, Sobchack also observes that 'What we look at projected on the screen... addresses us as the expressed perception of an anonymous, yet present, "other." And, as we watch this expressive projection of an "other's: experience, we, too, express our perceptive experience. Through the address of our own vision, we speak back to the cinematic expression before us, using a visual language that is also tactile [...],' (Sobchack 1992: 9). Sobchack uses Charles Peirce's evocative terms 'woof and warp' to describe how perception and expression pulse back and forth in order to constitute what we understand as a film.

<sup>6</sup> Any film, Sobchack argues, even structural-materialist film, presupposes that it will be understood as signification, as conveying meaning beyond the brute material presence of light and shadow on a plane surface, the cinema assumes its own intelligibility. To the infant the film is not yet a film, but to the mature viewing subject, the film is always *more* than its materialist presence. Intelligibility is assumed by filmmaker and spectator - the film experience rests on mutual presupposition of the inter-subjective nature of cinema.

<sup>7</sup> See Scene 3: 51.

<sup>8</sup> As Sobchack writes 'A film is an act of seeing that makes itself seen, an act of hearing that makes itself heard, an act of physical and reflective movement that makes itself reflexively felt and understood' (Sobchack 1992: 3-4).

<sup>9</sup> Increasingly, artists who use moving image are turning to the classical cinema as a source material to appropriate and critique. See for example the recent exhibition *Final Cut - Media Art and Cinema* at the Kunsthalle Dominikanerkirche Osnabrück, Germany, as a part of the EMAF film & video festival, April 25th to May 20th, 2007

<sup>10</sup> Don Ihde writes that checking on the final terminus of the perception of the world is an immediate, or direct, impossibility for the human eye. The camera is 'the hermeneut who enters the cavern to hear the saying of the

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oracle and we are left to his interpretation' (Don Ihde *The Experience of Technology* 2002: 275, quoted in Sobchack 1992: 187).

<sup>11</sup> Classical cinema generally presents itself to us as thinking organically; in other words its images represent the human organism and its relations to the world as centred and consistent. Such a cinema, however, simply confirms our conscious and subjective thoughts, our habitual bodily organization and its relations to an exterior world. The sensory-motor schema and the movement-image conspire in their natures of thought and their systems of seeing and hearing.

<sup>12</sup> Sobchack elaborates that 'the perceived geometry of the projected image was seen as setting the film's non-geometric perceptive boundaries, providing a circumscription of the premises of the camera's perception analogous to the way on which the lived-body provides the bounded premises for human perception. The frame is to the camera what the screen is to the projector [...] The screen is the material substance that enables the frame its function' (Sobchack 1992: 211).

<sup>13</sup> As Sobchack emphatically outlines, prior to the reified shorthand vocabulary of film theory, which gives to us films that are *formalist, realist, epic, spectacular, semiotic, psychoanalytic, structuralist, neoMarxist*, and offers us terms such as *montage, diegesis, suture, identification*, and other syntagmatic categories, prior to this categorization, a film, 'makes sense by virtue of its very ontology' (Sobchack 1992: 12).

<sup>14</sup> The DVD menu function is a cinematic open set. The DVD extras and Director's cut culture is a new and potentially exiting way in which to explore the structural volatility of any and all film.

<sup>15</sup> Janet Cardiff, *In Real Time*, 1999, site specific audio and video walk, located in the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, approximately 15 minutes.

<sup>16</sup> Janet Cardiff, interviewed by Atom Egoyan. <http://www.bombsite.com/cardiff/cardiff.html>.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> The Steadicam is a significant technological development in terms of how it brings together several of the film bodies outlined. The mobile and agile camera encourages lyrical movements from the camera operator and produces specific positions and repositions for the performers. The new art of the 'following-shot' has resulted. The Steadicam also makes for a different kind of embodiment in the viewer, who suddenly feels weightless, as though super-perceiving.

<sup>19</sup> For Artaud, the human body is a limited organization, not capable of encountering the tears and collisions of life without being crushed by them. This human body conducts thoughts and receives sensations from what he dubs a "pathetic inside" and converts these experiences into diluted representations, what Artaud, in his inflammatory prose, calls, 'stinking farts of gas.'

<sup>20</sup> *Pataphysics*, the science postulated by Alfred Jarry of solutions that are not possible in the physical world.

<sup>21</sup> *Scoring Belfast* (part of *Fix02*, Catalyst Arts performance art festival, Belfast).

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<sup>22</sup> Žižek borrows the term from Alain Badiou, and extends it. Slavoj Žizek, *From Purification to Subtraction: Badiou and the Real*: 173, in *Think Again, Alain Badiou and the future of Philosophy*, Ed. Peter Hallward 2004.

<sup>23</sup> Kenneth Anger, during a screening and discussion in Toronto (November 2006) commented that he is continually reworking his films, to the constant chagrin of film historians who are determined to fix their completion dates.

<sup>24</sup> On this point, Sobchack argues that, 'In this focus on embodiment and situation, existential, semiotic phenomenology is not out of step with the contemporary quest for an account of signification that grounds meaning as value-laden, committed, and socially active. Its aim is to locate the structure and meanings of phenomena in the contingency and openness of human existence' (Sobchack 1992: 31-32).



**Reality is, in the final analysis, nothing more than cinema in nature.**

**(Pasolini 1972: 198)**

**The camera must film, not the world, but belief in this world, our only link.**

**(Deleuze 1989: 172)**







Reality may be a human creation, but it is no toy; on the contrary it is the second of human creations. The first peculiarly human invention is representation. Once there is a practice of representing, a second order concept of reality follows in train. This is the concept of reality, a concept which has content only when there are first order representations.

(Ian Hacking 1983: 136<sup>1</sup>)

To put cinema into the lived world inevitably involves encountering the various attitudes filmmakers have adopted towards realism and the factual image. As guiding principles, emergence, irrationality, subjectivity and abstraction are not commensurable with the documentary's adherence to resemblance and to what Bill Nichols in *Representing Reality* terms 'the discourses of sobriety' (Nichols 1991: 3) i.e., science, history and politics. The activity of thought and the sensations of the body as aspects of actual experience remain largely un-resourced in the documentary, although the aura of subjectivity exists as a pressure and a possibility. How might we envision a cinematic tool concerned with a more multi-faceted and complex encounter with the lived social world but not premised on representation and objectivity? Before addressing this question, let us first consider the methods in which the documentary film achieves likeness and organizes meanings.

The indexical property of the cinematograph, the very life-likeness of the moving image (compared with the a-temporality of the still photograph, the painting or the written word<sup>3</sup>), has been the reason for the documentary film's obsession with similitude. This is what André Bazin terms the 'resemblance complex,'<sup>4</sup> the human compulsion to form life-like representations Hacking refers to, and also the automatic human response that appraises a rendered mark (if it is not a functional modification) on the level of whether it is a likeness or not. The advent of photography in the nineteenth century provided a new and more technical form of realism, and with it persuasive truth claims based on the second order semiotic value (Peircean *secondness*) of the images that were being produced. Photography, for Bazin, surpassed art because of its ability to lay bare what he called 'the realities.'<sup>7</sup> The indexicality

of the photograph produces a physical likeness of the image caused by, and bound to, the object represented and therefore what Bazin dubbed an absolute realism, a true similarity.<sup>8</sup> This photographic index, as Bazin described it, was freed from the intervention of human hands by way of an automated point-of-view. It substituted the shifting perspectives of a living subject with a technology for temporal seizure and exactitude, and provided the transference of reality from the thing to its reproduction.<sup>9</sup>

The photographic image is the object itself, the object freed from the conditions of time and space that govern it. No matter how fuzzy, distorted, or discoloured, no matter how lacking in the documentary value the image may be, it shares, by virtue of the very process of its becoming, the being of the model of which it is the reproduction of; it is the model.

(Bazin 1967: 14)

Bazin's phenomenology revels with quasi-religious fervour in the corporeal process of the photograph and cinematograph. The moving image is touched and literally (chemically) made evident by light. More than a likeness, the movement of the photograph in rapid succession is the physical imprint of the world in time. Bazin is convinced of the cinema's cold mechanical objectivity and its unassailable status as the producer of truth. He sees the film camera as the *mummifier* of time, its form of mechanical reproduction providing transcendence from the limitations of western painting and all of the tensions between symbolism and realism attached to previous representational art forms.<sup>12</sup> Cinéma vérité in particular was, to Bazin, a project to end art and supply the real itself.

The camera does not know what it sees but nonetheless it does record, and is capable of capturing certain attributes of the lived world (light, movement) with the minimal intervention of human opinion. A camera can, for example, be mistakenly left recording and capture duration without intention. If the camera is left recording in a bag, it may have registered an image without form, a firstness image which cannot yet connote and must remain as abstraction until the context of the recording is revealed. Ordinarily, the image material the camera regards is received as secondness, in that the moving images look like the world regarded. Secondness is where the documentary would logically be most at home,

particularly direct cinema; it is the eventfulness the documentary claims to accurately record. Most film or videotape 'rushes' constitute an image-flow of a set of events that provoke movements by the editor in terms of an assemblage (edits are performed), where meaning is ascribed to the sequence in terms of edit revisions and by the addition of narration, score, titles, and so on. The resemblance complex of which Bazin speaks is of this third order semiotics, what Peirce termed *thirdness* - the category of language and language-like operations. Thirdness constitutes the dominant currency of our enunciation and recognition, none more so than in the moving image.<sup>13</sup>

In the first incarnations of the documentary film we can observe the transformation of unfettered images of the lived world into meaningful forms, built on the foundations of a realism that had clearly established narratives for the representation of a predominantly working class, or for a racially exotic other. Applying Hacking's rationale, it is not difficult to see the relationship between apparent life-likeness and the capability of the documentary to effect social change. In the earliest of factual films we find the translation of a classic social realist sensibility into the moving image: images of everyday industrial, low-income life in the Lumière Brothers' *actualités* (for example, *Workers leaving the Lumière Factory* 1895); the use of narrative editing to heighten the sense of realism in Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* (1922). Flaherty's infamous construction of a semi-circular igloo for the purposes of filming and lighting provides a fitting example of what Nichols calls *découpage*, the carefully constructed artificial space and time within the documentary where a director stops and starts activities within the actual situation in order to re-set the cinematographic apparatus in accordance to a pre-conceived outcome. John Grierson proclaimed that the very purpose of the documentary was to make 'creative use of actuality,' in order to achieve social impact. His *Night Mail* (1936) featured postal workers 'playing themselves' in studio reconstructions of train carriage sorting rooms.<sup>14</sup> In Soviet realist films of the 1920s and 30s this form of active social construction carried over to the structuring of the viewer's historical-materialist consciousness. Dziga Vertov's *Kino-Eye* newsreels were shot, edited and screened around the

country on board a fleet of agitprop trains and steamers, assembled according to Marxist historical dialectic and the principles of constructivism.<sup>15</sup> In these examples we can find the beginnings of closed-hypothesis realism in the documentary form. Both pre and post-war classical cinema, whether politically of the left or right, East or West, fiction or documentary, has as its agenda the representation of a people who are, as Rodowick describes, 'already there, "real before being actual, ideal before being abstract"' (Rodowick 1992: 153, quoting Deleuze. 1986: 16).<sup>16</sup> The people are seen as 'representable.'

The dominant order tends to regard the marginal as actively in need of representations from outside of their community or culture. The ethnographic film, for example, makes a case study by picturing the other *as voice* - as an utterable subject - and then communicating the others' communication for them. This inevitably creates a division between common speech and artistic aestheticization, or *parole* (an act or utterance) and *langue* (a language system).<sup>17</sup> The *parole* of local dialect - the everyday speech of the working class, or speech that is classified as ethnic - is re-framed by and through the *langue*, or the received normative language of the ethnographer who is looking in. The various peoples we see on our screens in ethnographic films are brought into being by this process. As Deleuze & Guattari argue, 'the race summoned forth by art or philosophy is not the one that claims to be pure but rather an oppressed, bastard, lower, anarchical, nomadic, and irremediably minor race' (Deleuze & Guattari 1994: 109). Similarly, in Hollywood cinema we find an individual protagonist often standing for an organic collective or a mass ideology. In Soviet Realist cinema, the group replaces the individual hero, but the filmmakers retain the use of image manipulation (dialectical montage, in the case of Eisenstein) to represent a class experience. Eisenstein and Vertov had as their agenda the proposition for an image of a collective people - a challenge to the supremacy of acted fictions - that used social non-actors, but this objective became caught in the trappings of representation and image spectacle. In the pre-war period both Soviet realism and American cinema presented a people as bound to unfolding history, as teleologically determined historical subjects.<sup>18</sup> According to Deleuze, the modernist

aspiration of Soviet Realism collapsed into state controlled mediation and America 'lost the ability to envision itself as a people "to come"' (Deleuze 1989). We will return to the idea of a group called 'the people,' who are largely, if not entirely, absent from the documentary form of representation, but for the time being I would like to explore in more detail the complexity of methods used by the factual filmmaker to achieve a realism which is perceived as on behalf of and reflecting this people.

Realism in the documentary film involves the deployment of technique and rhetoric. It is not only in the propagandist statements of Soviet Realism that we find rhetoric at play; rhetoric exists in any and all textual utterances. Classical documentary uses a range of styles to compel the audience towards a particular argument or point of view. This is commonly a moral or ethical position on an issue or situation in the current or the historical world, with rhetoric the chief device used by the filmmaker to convey this outlook to an audience.<sup>19</sup> Nichols provides a number of ways in which rhetoric can convince the viewer of a particular argument. These include the use of evidence (such as that of the eye witness), artistic proof (i.e., the quality of the film's production and articulation), ethical unassailability (for example the unquestionable moral character or 'good name' of the presenter and/or filmmaker), emotional disposition and on-screen demonstration. Emotional proofs depend on pre-existing associations from the viewer, and most commonly involve the deployment of suggestive musical scoring or emotive image juxtaposition, making continued use of Eisenstein's dialectical montage. The above terms may be combined, for instance, when a 'trustworthy' commentator makes an emotional appeal during a crime reconstruction. Demonstrative rhetorical proof concentrates on making the evidence persuasive rather than necessarily accurate. Nichols gives a succinct example of this in the abundant half-truths of advertising, where the use of rhetoric has to do with influence rather than with precision or fact, the broadcaster relying heavily on clichés of core values and the conventions of a culture, particularly in the USA. As Nichols explains, 'rhetoric courts the viewer as style reveals the author' (Nichols 1991: 136). In this sense, factual cinema and television operate an elaborate

system of style and manipulation where rhetorical influence is as often implicit as it is explicit. For example, the declaration of non-bias can be, and often is, utilized as a form of rhetoric. The documentary has rejected elements of the fictional or the make-believe in order to secure confederacy with the institutions of the world that exert real power and have the ability to affect change. That is to say the documentary is almost always in essence propagandist, the image placed in the service of the dominant ideology as spectacle and distraction. But the documentary, as a cultural product, required a network of distribution and so kept close company with the fiction film (the publicly agreed foremost style for the representational image) in order to make use of its systems of reception as entertainment.

This kinship with the mechanism of Hollywood and its storytelling has made for an uncomfortable association with the discourses of sobriety, for neither science nor economics seeks to entertain. Nichols proposes four modes for the documentary: expository (a narrated story of events), observational/ethnographic (a more direct seeing of events), interactive (a conscious engagement with events) and reflexive (a self-conscious inflection of events). Erik Barnouw also delineates four categories, but for the attitude of the documentary filmmaker, as either prophet, explorer, reporter, or painter.<sup>20</sup> Bordwell and Thompson similarly produce a quartet of approaches, but these are thematic: categorical, rhetorical, abstract, and associational (2003). In *Theorizing Documentary* Michael Renov outlines that the documentary sets out to either: record/reveal/preserve; to persuade/promote; to analyze/interrogate or to express (Michael Renov 1993).<sup>21</sup> Clearly, the factual moving image is a hybrid of objective representations of what we understand to be the historical world. Nichols observes that the documentary strikes a complex and contradictory position in the history of the moving image (Nichols 1991: 166). Methodologically, the documentary believes itself allied to discourses of sobriety, structurally it allies itself with the codes and conventions of classical cinema narrative, and yet, culturally, it distances itself from diary films, from the films of the amateur cineastes and socialist workers collectives, and from the early actualities from which the documentary initially derived. Whichever of the modes

proposed, the documentary inexorably incorporates models of realism, and involves rhetorical overtones, whether cleverly intended or not.

Cinéma vérité seeks to unearth truths through tenacity and by way of prolonged and supposedly unobtrusive exposure to a subject. The idealistic objective of Direct Cinema, the American variant of the documentary cinéma vérité tradition, was to deploy cameras that recorded without yet making sense of, or understanding, what was seen. This attempt at a frictionless cine-anthropology imagines a film that films by itself, to show without telling, an ideal that direct cineastes such as Pennebaker, the Maysles Brothers, Leacock and Wiseman adhered to. As Amos Poe remarked, "Filming the truth, you get one take, you can't re-do it" (Amos Poe 2003<sup>22</sup>). However, Direct Cinema lifted the Hollywood story telling device of crisis and dramatic teleological content, charting unstable sets of affairs that developed in complexity before achieving resolution. Direct cinema makers stressed the need for the representation of an everyday uncluttered by the presence of filmmaker and crew. Frederick Wiseman, for instance, advocated the near invisibility of those behind the screen, and went to great lengths to minimize the effect of his own presence, seeking to convey the impression that people were, 'being themselves.' This required what Nichols terms a sophisticated form of non-intervention.<sup>23</sup> In order to create a situation where the subjects were 'being themselves' the crew had to not be their selves, i.e., to tightly control their behaviour and pretend to not be present. This is the paradox of cinéma vérité: 'The discipline and control of mise-en-scène that would have been directed toward what occurs in front of the camera gets turned on those behind it. They must move and position themselves to record actions without altering or distorting those actions at the same time' (Nichols 1991: 14).

Many documentary filmmakers pre-script the factual film they plan to shoot, mapping out plot arcs and points of dramatic or emotional tension, with false and true resolutions. Abbas Kiarostami has commented about his own work, and the cinema in general that, 'Every film is ultimately a reenactment of reality, not that reality itself' (Kiarostami<sup>24</sup>). Cinema

verisimilitude has as a style found implementation in socially rooted fictional films commonly referred to as docudramas.<sup>25</sup> Ken Loach's *Cathy Come Home* (1966) and *The Big Flame* (1969) feature the single viewpoint of a long lens camera, which denies the viewer the complex arrangements of shots customary to classical narrative, and thereby creates the effect of factual legitimacy. Raymond Williams writes of Loach that, 'a certain dramatic, but also political, hypothesis is established... a hypothesis which is played out in realistic terms but within a politically imagined possibility' (Raymond Williams 1989: 234). In the docudrama realism is a self-effacing style designed to disguise the trace of the filmmaker, and premised upon the image viewed as an extension of the eye and the ear. Having made a number of factual films, including *X-Ray* (1974), Kzysztow Kieslowski came to the realization that there were things he could not show in a documentary (either physically, or morally) and he instead opted to take his documentary style into fictional forms of telling, for example *Camera Buff* (1979), which is itself a reflexive story about the life-altering capacity of filmmaking.

The documentary remains commonly understood as literalism, as the way the world actually is, and yet it privileges the seeable over the perceived, over the remembered and the imagined. In other words, what can be objectively seen has gained almost entire dominance over what is subjectively perceived. The *seeing* of thought and the sensations of the body do not figure in the expositional, ethnographic and interventional films outlined by Nichols. The raw unfettered indexicality of the photographic image, the 'sticky stuff', which Bazin claimed to be the reality of the image (and which helped form a cultural idea of authenticity that sparked all kinds of dread in the digital age), speaks only for realism in terms of the visible event evidenced by the chemical, analogue photograph, and does not account for interiority as a form of realism. In fact, indexicality is precisely the reason for the eclipsing of the subjective, for the secondness image presents the model without interiority. Subjectivity eludes the grasp of the photographic; what is thought or felt cannot fall within the photographic register. This is not only the case for analogue images. Digital video, whose indexical status remains much debated, replicates the rectilinear aspect ratio of academy 4:3



or 16:9, now 'capturing' frames (i.e., converting light into binary code) rather than 'exposing' them. Whether a documentary is produced using analogue or digital technologies, abstract thinking is at all times subordinate to the registered image. This allegiance to the optical 'fact' in the documentary has, as Nichols notes, been at the cost of the exploration of more anomalous forms of rendering an experience of, or mediated encounter with, the lived world. In its fixation with fact, history and the observational, the documentary has occluded other dimensions of human experience, ones that are largely interior and not subject to scientific models of verification. Because we cannot record thoughts and ideas, nor fix memories and temporal lapses, they have not been given a place in the documentary. The fore-grounded subjectivity of evoking human recollection, or of making camera shots which appear to give equivalence to the point-of-view of human vision, have to date found no real place in factual filmmaking, certainly not in the classical documentary.

This is a supremacy that can be challenged, given the fact that we also do not zoom, track, cut or even directly perceive using rectangular frames in our own sensorium. A film or video camera may record with steely detachment, but it is the human subject, whose subjectivity and ideology exists at either a conscious or an unconscious level, who commonly operates the camera and equally is the object of the camera's vision. Across the board in the factual film we can observe a consistent disregard to emergent mental relations and the denial of formal possibilities. And yet what we *see* is not all that is real. On an implicit level, however, any documentary is tightly enmeshed in subjective rhetorical devices. For example, in the classical expository form of the narrated wildlife film it is not uncommon to be presented with the point-of-view of an animal (Nichols gives the example of a documentary about a toad). We may be watching stock-footage cutaways, following a story involving animals personified in character-based and identifiably human struggles, and hearing studio recorded Foley sound that has micro amplification but no indexical link to the image origin. These enhanced or fabricated perceptual moments join subjectivity to the objective image; the narrative content of the sequence provides a distraction from the inherent falsity of the

arrangement. In many ways we can find in such an example the template for more extraordinary approaches to the human factual subject, particularly in terms of a more haptic use of sound.<sup>26</sup> Certainly, the idiosyncrasy and timbre of the human voice, so lacking in the 'cleaned-up' speech of the conventionally recorded and edited interviewee, is one avenue for exploring subjectivity. The crystalline aspect of time and memory in time-image fiction is another, and this has been the fertile ground for Chris Marker's experimental documentary career, which we will come to.

The aura of subjectivity within a documentary also occurs around dramatic reenactments of actual events, which move a film's categorization very close to fiction. It is not unusual to see interview testimony supported by a cut-away to reenactments of the events described. These images, often rendered in different film stock or media, or treated differently in terms of colour grade, are not flashbacks in the strictest sense, because they are not fully attributed to a thinker. Instead they exist, not as the point-of-view or perception of a person but rather as the 'speculated' or the 'imagined' of the documentary itself. This is an example of the fictional mode entering the documentary mode. In Brian Hill's *Drinking for England* (1998) the subjects of the film break into song to articulate their varying addictions to alcohol. In each instance the lyrics are pre-written, in collaboration with a songwriter and a musician, but the spoken testimony that precedes and follows each subjective interruption to the text is factual, historically rooted and seemingly un-prompted.<sup>28</sup> The classical documentary cannot by its very nature venture to represent drunkenness, and the occurrence of each song serves to highlight the limitations of this kind of factual form, but the unusual delivery of the text points to the levels of social difference alcohol can induce, and brings spiritedness to the production. As Roscoe and Paget write of *Drinking for England*, 'The "event of the song" in documusical produces a kind of obverse effect to Reality TV's flickers of authenticity, abruptly breaking away as it does from the conventions of documentary and accelerating *into*, rather than *out of*, something altogether more theatrical. There is definitely a "flicker" here, but one signaling a new kind of life – that of performance' (Roscoe & Paget 2001<sup>29</sup>). This

tactic, of song as testimony, does not necessarily undermine the authority of the film text, or make the viewer react to the characters on the screen as fictitious; it merely offers the additional element of personal experience delivered through music rather than through the conventional - but arguably equally theatrical - set-up of the interview.<sup>30</sup> There is a speech act that reveals otherwise obscured aspects to their character.

Does the moving image add to a displacement from the real already exacerbated by language and signs, or take us closer to the real by increasing our understanding of such mediating forces? Photography may have been the dominant resemblance for the (mid-late) nineteenth century, yet the achievements of photography did not give us the real, only its duplication or transparency. The cinematograph and the video camera constituted the dominant resemblance apparatus for the twentieth century and although, increasingly, complex digital events are placing the validity of moving images in question, video, and to a lesser extent film, remain the dominant forms for representation in the twenty-first century. In the moving image, perceptual realism is above all else a style. Hollywood tries to make high definition video look like 35mm; there is the concerted effort of banks of programmers to produce a computer generated imaging of grass by producing algorithms of *grass in general* which appear to the viewer as consisting of grass in particular. This grass in general is, however, sharper than the noise of our vision. Reality TV, also, strives for a realism that has the appearance of being of the moment of the event, through conscious use of hand-held blurry images, jump cuts, and dead moments. Indexicality has the cultural value of the *impression of authenticity*,<sup>31</sup> something we currently perceive in the pixilated video streams from embedded war journalists, (although there is much debate over whether a digital image is an index of real events<sup>32</sup>).

The impression of indexicality has substantial psychological influence, and, in the current cultural context of digital imagery, is linked to an image's real-time status: if an image is coming to us in real-time, then it has the semiotic value of being less likely to have passed

through modification.<sup>33</sup> In *The Evil Demon of Images* (1987<sup>34</sup>) Jean Baudrillard writes 'The secret of the image... must not be sought in its differentiation from reality, and hence in its representative value (aesthetic, critical or dialectical), but on the contrary in its "telescoping" into reality, its short-circuit with reality, and finally, in the implosion of image and reality' (Baudrillard, quoted in Nichols 1991: 6). Baudrillard says that images are fundamentally immoral, and that therein lays the power an image possesses, what Deleuze might call the power of its falsity. For Baudrillard, there is no longer an objective 'out there,' only the image of its simulation. Nichols rejects this, stating that there remains a difference between an image and the real, and although he suggests possibilities for embracing less scientific attitudes in the documentary, he also warns that by refuting truth claims the documentary (particularly the reflexive documentary) is in danger of avoiding the expression of actual events. The debate about the elusive nature of the real, where reality is seen as beyond depiction or comprehension, is to the modernist an ideological myth, and a dangerous one at that.<sup>35</sup> The issue here is the political implications of the postmodern blurring of fact and fiction and the post-structural distrust of meta-narratives and the totalitarian regime of language. Does this blurring offer innovative creative possibility or merely a disengaged and apolitical free-play of perceived surfaces? On this point Nichols writes that 'Documentary may talk about anything in the historical world except itself (until we consider reflexive documentaries). It is hard to be reflexive if you have something pressing to say about an issue' (Nichols 1991: 17). The truth-seeking documentary-maker asks that filmmakers and broadcasters discount reflexivity, poetry and formalism in order to directly address the *thing in itself* - the lived social world - with all of its complexity and trauma, arguing that, in spite of post-structural protestations, we need the nerve to say that there are some things that are incontrovertibly, and singularly, *real*.

Our access to historical reality may only be by means of representations, and these representations may sometimes seem more eager to chase their own tails than able to guarantee the authenticity of what they refer to. Neither of these conditions, however, precludes the persistence of history as a reality with which we must contend.

(Nichols 1991: 7)

According to Nichols, historical reality is under siege, and yet he also makes the point that history is precisely what the documentary-maker cannot ever control. Whether the filmmaker is cognizant of it or not, his or her meta-subject is always that which is always outside of any attempt to capture it: history.<sup>36</sup> Nichols also concedes that there is an element of truth to Baudrillard's conceptual nihilism, in that the image has made reality subordinate to it (and this is Hacking's thesis), but he states that it is precisely the cold and hard reality of death in warfare that enables clear distinctions to be made between a lived world and a mediated one. The first Gulf War might not have happened (as Baudrillard provocatively claimed) in terms of our distance to it as peculiar and passive audience members, but it also *did* happen - people died, and there are images of these deaths (although these are the types of images that Governments and television channels deem unsuitable for broadcast, because, we are told, they would be too traumatic and cause additional stress to families of the deceased<sup>37</sup>).

Crisis and trauma are what bring the real profoundly home to the individual, but crisis, like any other lived situation, becomes quickly compressed into narrative, into a unit of entertainment, and increasingly must fit within the ideologies and unique sales strategies of broadcasters and their sponsors. One clear example of this would be private Jessica Lynch, the American Soldier 'rescued' by US forces in Iraq. The US military, working with embedded journalists, stormed the hospital where Lynch was held captive, but did so more than a day after they knew her captors had fled the building, firing only blanks from their guns.<sup>38</sup> In this example we see that trauma is translated into spectacle: none of the news reports concentrated on Lynch's actual ordeal, only on the sensational display of her rescue and the later scandal of its veritive fictions. 'Reality is ours for the making' writes Nichols (1991: 11), but clearly he did not mean this. It is difficult to envision how a documentary-maker can now proceed in an unfettered rendering of a real event, which is supposedly out there, awaiting or evading capture. Would she observe journalistic codes of conduct arrived at through market forces or as a result of increasing political pressure from administrations, or

would she make codes of her own and, if so, would we prefer that she did? How limited are the facts she has to hand and how pervasive are the fashions, idioms and economic forces for presenting those facts? How can she speak for another whose experience she has not known? Representation invents a singular concept of reality, a motivated version. Rather than as an indexical device for pointing at the real and recording it, how might we think of the moving image as an apparatus that complicates our understanding of what kind of a real it is we are perceptually and cognitively maintaining? After all, it is very often our encounter with an irreducible lived world, and our inability to express it, which forms the textures of our expressions.

If there were a modern political cinema, it would be on this basis: the people no longer exist, or not yet... *the people are missing*...Art, and especially cinematographic art, must take part in this task: not that of addressing a people, which is presupposed already there, but of contributing to the invention of a people.

(Deleuze 1989: 216-17)

The 'people' of film documentary are not the people actually participating, and the 'people' of film narrative are not the same as the people who are watching the film; they are, rather, their constructions. The people are missing. A philosophy of a minor cinema says that the people (that is, our selves) must organize their, our, own representation; any attempts by others to do so on the people's behalf leads back to an absence of the people. It is in the post-War period, for the most part in Europe, that Deleuze first recognizes a counter cinema, one that begins to relinquish the objective of representing a people. In the co-mingling of dialect and the Italian language in neo realism Deleuze discovers a minor cinema whose utterances are spoken within the context of a dominant language, which is the classical cinema and documentary. The dialect of this minor cinema, and its usage and alteration of existent normative tropes, gives Deleuze hope. Deleuze does not mean that there is a pre-existent but as yet unrealized unity that a missing people can assume or possess. He means that concepts are needed which enable both virtual sites (creative thought) and real sites (creative conduct) in which a people can find invention. One concept for this invention is to privilege the act of utterance over what is being uttered, to favour the immediacy of a filmmaking *parole* over a cinematic *langue*. Such film utterances are speech acts determined by the locality and

contingency of their making. They are not planned or completed in accordance to fixed schemas.

Deleuze's concentrated attention on neo realist cinema is based on Pasolini's concept of a *cinema of poetry*. The cinema of poetry uses free indirect discourse to introduce real objects into fictional frames, and vice-versa.<sup>39</sup> A free indirect camera blurs the distinction between objectivity (the lens) and subjectivity (the character; the cinematographer and/or director), and, in blurring that divide, announces that the greatest element of the cinema as an art form is the indiscernability between subjectivity and objectivity. Pasolini thought of modern cinema as essentially a sliding of representational ground between fiction and reality, that which broke 'the uniformity of the internal monologue (the erased author) to replace it by the diversity, the deformity, the otherness of a free indirect discourse' (Pasolini, quoted in Deleuze 1992: 183-184). Pasolini suggests that the cinema is an arrangement of signs whose semiology brings us into contact, not with the linguistic structures and articulations of written or spoken language, but rather to a possible sign system of reality itself, the writing of the non-linguistic with the non-linguistic, what he described as, 'writing the real with the real.'<sup>41</sup> The moving image is unlike other art forms because, rather than making a figuration of the lived world, it takes quotations directly from it. And so *Theorem* (Pasolini 1968) begins with archive newsreel footage of a workers' strike, before progressing to a fictional drama. *The Passion According to St. Matthew* (Pasolini 1964) features actuality footage of rural Italy, which in the edit, is constituted as the point-of-view of a fictional character. And Rossellini frequently cast in his films locals who lived and worked in the film location.<sup>42</sup>

It was the Russian Formalist and cultural theorist Mikhail Bakhtin who first suggested this form of free indirect discourse in *Rabelais and His World* (Bakhtin 1984<sup>43</sup>), although there is no evidence to say that Pasolini was aware of Bakhtin's work. In the writings of Rabelais and the carnival of the seventeenth century, Bakhtin gives analysis to the relationship between official language and dialect. Here, free indirect discourse is an

enunciation forming part of an utterance that depends on a different subject of enunciation, and this produces intra-subjectivity. The deployment of free indirect discourse reveals in any text the inter-play of subjective and objective voices, or points of view: the actual and the imaginary, the factual and the fictional are rendered as indistinct, each exceeding the other, creating speech act utterances that simultaneously use language and perform operations *upon* language.<sup>44</sup> The free indirect camera of neo realism is a form of disengaged vision that enables the artist to lift the veil from the lived world, producing images that provide a meeting point between perception and reality. As Deleuze comments, 'The real was no longer represented or reproduced but 'aimed at'. Instead of representing an already deciphered real, neo-realism aimed at an always ambiguous, to be deciphered, real; this is why the sequence shot tended to replace the montage of representations... neo-realism produced a formal or material "additional reality"' (Deleuze 1992: 1).

Often in the documentary, free indirect relations crop up around non-contiguous cut-away shots, for example, during war films, when actual footage from combat is cut into studio recorded dramatic scenes as the 'seen' of the actor in the cockpit. Without the anchoring of the action-image, these cut-away film utterances leave the viewer feeling as though two-headed. As Deleuze articulates, 'The speech-act must create itself as a foreign language in a dominant language' (Deleuze 1992: 223). Free indirect point of view shots are stylistic rather than linguistic; with these instances of looking and seeing, there is no direct discourse, i.e., no voice over, or dissolve announcing that the image sequence is a 'dream;' there are no clear markers of subjectivity, as is usually coded in narrative cinema, and therefore there is no clear borderline between the objective and the subjective. We might say that neo realism had as its objective the reversal of the semiotic sequencing of the sensory-motor schema, which looks to rapidly move images from firstness, through secondness, to thirdness. During certain moments in neo realist cinema, images with narrative belonging become loose of mooring, straying from cause and effect until settling as image without intention or thought. It is impossible to say, during these stray occurrences, whether the image before us is functioning



as factual or fictional. It is both. Deleuze claims that neo realist images turn exterior spaces into mental relations. In fact, the time-image is the very emergence of firstness from secondness and thirdness, where characters (and viewers) become pure seers, receptive to spatial properties and unfolding durations outside of the sensible means to understand them.

Film theory and production has tended to concentrate on how the cinema produces a subject, turning away from considering how it attempts to reproduce reality. The cinematic project of attempting to reproduce reality is of course an impossible one. What the cinema does best is articulate the difference between the lived world and our renderings of similarity towards it; it is at its most incisive when it produces the meaning of its inability to reproduce reality. We are moving towards the difficult territory of regarding the moving image as, above all else, poetic in its forms and capabilities. This kind of cinema articulates volatile differences rather than similarities; it draws vitality from the very difference, in its utterance, from that which it is making articulations towards. The transience of our grasp of the real is what constitutes the poetic utterance, and in science, often what we cannot know of the real helps us position relative truths about it. As András Bálint Kovács observes, Deleuze emphasizes the work of art's difference to the lived world, rather than its similarity.

When one focuses on similarity rather than difference, one concentrates on structure (rather than on poetry, which is free and anarchic). A work of art is not a copy or a representation of a real thing; it is as real as the real. Art is the highest level of repetition and is on the same level as the so-called real thing. The difference between simulacra and reality is of the same nature as certain differences within reality.  
(Kovács 2005<sup>46</sup>)

To make a representation is to force the unnamable into the nameable, to reduce a contingent and emergent actuality into signs that speak for it and prize from the event discrete and reproducible elements or entities. This is what Žižek calls totalitarianism - to brutally impose onto reality an authored realism.<sup>47</sup> Deleuze's philosophy regards an articulation or expression as art only if it surpasses the realm of representation.<sup>48</sup> Art is a figure moving towards the state of not-figure, towards the pinnacle of artistic expression, which is the

expression of an idea. This art creates affects and percepts, chaining and unchaining along a plane of immanence, which is a possible that has not yet become. Whereas philosophy is the practice of the virtual of thought, such an art is the practice of sensations, what Peter Hallward calls 'a zone of experimentation with the matter of the real' (Hallward 2006<sup>50</sup>). Between formalism and realism, between linguistic utterance and non-linguistic expression, between fabulation and historical fact, is the process of emergence, the taking place of something new which comes to be through its relation to what is.

However, the thing that creating creates is always already old and prone to habitual patterns, and for Deleuze the dynamism of the creating process matters more than the creator or what is created: the work itself has no intrinsic spiritual dynamism, only the creating, the *doing*. The writing matters more than what is written, and as a practice of philosophy Deleuze tries to extract the process from the result, looking for the very ontology of a fresh idea and the experimentations that organisms (especially people) and machines are capable of doing.<sup>53</sup> This is *esprit*, what Deleuze names *affect*, which in art is the marking of marks irrespective of their signification. Affect replaces categorization. Deleuze's transcendental empiricism releases realism from representation: art is not the creation of likenesses, but the invention of new patterns, of *differences*. This is an approach to form *as* invention, rather than form working from pre-existing, a-priori structures. Deleuze, as radical realist then, returns the subject to the object it had observed and tried to gain mastery over by duplicating it as art. As Rodowick summarizes, there is no longer the Cartesian split, because both the subject and the object are equally a part of time.<sup>54</sup>

Art puts forward a proposal for how to perceive what we are living, and yet its greatest capacity is for putting forward proposals for how to perceive what we are not-yet-living. For Deleuze, art is inorganic and not a representation of reality.<sup>55</sup> Systems do not need unity, and this would include the system of the narrative fiction and of the documentary. In order to produce difference we require seriality and repetition - the rhizome - the dynamics of

proliferation of a system, which is in fact opposed to regularity. In Chris Marker's *Sans Soleil* (1982) the seriality of seemingly unrelated images makes of the narration what Deleuze describes as a 'fabrication capable of bringing forth such historical events as the creation of a people' (Deleuze 1989: 141). Rodowick explains that such a series requires an act of historical imagination that produces the new and releases identity from teleology (the politics of identity as the self-same) into the series, where identity and history are creatively falsified. In essence, the emphasis for thought is given to that which is open to time as series, as the expression of 'not yet' which can give rise to the 'not yet' existence of a people. This can take place provided that the people are no longer constituted by what is previous. According to Branigan, *Sans Soleil* 'explores some of the general forms of intelligibility available in our society' (Branigan 1992: 116) including the attitude the moving image takes towards the past and to memory, what Adrian Miles describes as, 'the technologies of memory, of record, of the processes and activities combining memory with the quotidian'.<sup>56</sup> Official histories and collective images of a people shape and restrict the episteme of a culture's self-image; the quotidian becomes the general rather than the particular. This is one of the processes by which the individual becomes lost within the general, i.e., the category of a people. This has been the particular effect of broadcast television, but also of the cinema, what Deleuze calls 'public images,' that, 'comprise a sort of official history, which the unpreserved present that passes is more like unofficial history or private memory' (Deleuze 1989). Rodowick writes that a revolutionary form of cinema must allow a collective political goal without necessitating a collective subject (Rodowick 1997: 153<sup>57</sup>). This includes the transformation of the past as the constituent of a present identity, and Deleuze offers the tool of the *powers of the false* to bring about this creative evolution, through difference and through change. Powers of the false are the thought flight lines of an imagination not bound by history, identity or spatial/temporal order. The fabulation of the historical imagination is the central concept for a modern political cinema produced by and for a missing people. *Sans Soleil* presents a false memory syndrome. The memories and diary images of the actual cinematographer (who is in fact a fictional device) cannot be separated from the images of television and found footage. The film is in

fact the assemblage, after the fact, of many hours of travelogue material filmed and gathered by Marker, creating new lines of past-present by fictionalizing the past. This is why Marker's film calls for a kind of *pillow book* cinema, a future populated by poets who each create their own, 'lists of things that quicken the heart' (The Cinematographer, *Sans Soleil*).<sup>58</sup>

A pillow book cinema has resonance with philosopher Gilbert Ryle's concept of *thick description*, which is the attempt to recognize (and render) the very detail of the everyday rather than the broad stroke or the general view.<sup>59</sup> A thick description of human behaviour, in anthropology and other fields, is one that accounts not only for actions but also for the situation of their taking place, such that the context gives vital meaning to anyone outside of the situation who is looking in and trying to ascertain significance. Ryle, in *Collected Papers* (1973), gives the example of a wink, which, out of context, has no evident meaning. As the context emerges, the connotation of the wink changes. The documentary has proved surprisingly lacking in such detail or thick description, compressing information into crude approximations, with the complexity of lived experience inevitably exceeding its frame. This loss of complexity is the standard complaint aimed at broadcast news and factual programming. The anthropologist and ethnographer Clifford Geertz borrowed the term thick description from Ryle to propose a process of inscription replacing one of evidence, an attitude of research that may prove innovative to documentary filmmakers. Inscription has the potential for allowing the image to remain as affect, where it vibrates in firstness. It might be more useful to stop trying to treat cinema as a 'language' and investigate other methods (psychological or neurological, perhaps) in order to try to envision an affect-based documentary image, one that is fired with alterity. This is not a new endeavour. During the same post war period in which neo realist cinema emerged, Maya Deren called for a 'verticality' in film, distinguishable from the 'horizontal' film structure associated with drama, what Deren describes as 'one circumstance – one action – leading to another' (Deren, quoted in P. Adams Sitney 2002: 173-4). A vertical film structure, or a poetic structure, 'probes the ramifications of the moment, and is concerned with its qualities and its depth, so that you

have poetry concerned, in a sense, not with what is occurring but with what it feels like or with what it means' (ibid<sup>60</sup>).

What exceeds the reach of the factual image is also, and in some cases most profoundly, its subject. The most pointed example of such excess would be the termination of life, death as excess. Stan Brakhage's *The Act of Seeing One's Own Eyes* (1971), is a mute film shot in a morgue and dispassionately following a series of autopsies - a relentless gaze at a historical reality that no structure, code, system, lens, or thing, can contain. Werner Herzog's *Land of Silence and Darkness* (1971) is a documentary that, in presenting individuals who were born deaf and blind, points directly to the limitations of the medium, profoundly demonstrating how encounters with the very limits of the medium are where its greatest insights present themselves to us, as active viewers. Both films direct the camera to the camera's very limit, and train the viewer's attention on the threshold of what is perceivable and knowable. By presenting the reality that there are things we cannot represent, such a cinema begins to advance propositions towards what Adorno describes as a radical naturalism:

...if the film were to give itself up to the blind representation of everyday life, following the precepts of, say, Zola, as would indeed be practicable with moving photography and sound recording, the result would be a construction alien to the visual habits of the audience, diffuse, unarticulated outwards. Radical naturalism, to which the technology of film lends itself, would dissolve all surface coherence of meaning and finish up as the antithesis of familiar realism.

(Theodor W. Adorno, quoted in Philip Rosen 2001: 47<sup>62</sup>)

This radical naturalism that Adorno imagined denatures the factual mode, by incorporating counter-intuitive and pre-linguistic or poetic possibilities within it, creating a fact-fictional film continuum and a level of perception which is not afraid to exploit its differences to our own. Such an other-nature cinema is the transvergence of reality, a state of plurality, of crisscrossing lines of flight and planes of immanence, where the real is revealed as the antagonism between conflicting assertions towards it. This denatured cinema is as natural as the nature we know of, although it is more than human nature. This new event of

cinema must therefore be as much scatological and sociological as it is concerned with or bound to the history of cinema as we have come to know it.

If we introduce free indirect elements to our factual cinema, and embrace accident and contingency; if we adopt thick rather than thin description and give privilege to the body as well as to teleological information and entertainment arcs; if we regain license to incorporate distressed elements to the assemblage, to incorporate irrationality and verticality, even, and experiment with other attributes of the fiction film; if we purposefully problematize the proclamation of irrefutable evidence and the construction of incontrovertible historical subjects, and if we steer away from an obsession with likeness and the social imperative to represent and instead point out the limits of representation (the excessive as always present, as absence), we might (re)discover another kind of film. Such a cinema would adopt a responsively dialectical method informed by no particular teleology. Imagine bodily news reports from a zone of conflict, crystalline recollections in history programmes, unfettered durations standing in for narrated sequences, irreverent shards of moving images, reproducing affect. Currently on *YouTube* we can watch the low-end digital video single take of the New York Twin Towers attack, recorded by an observer through a camcorder from an overlooking apartment, complete with off camera asides of distress intermixed with mundanity.<sup>64</sup> In contemporary television sports coverage, we find the near instantaneous recollection of the match, with winner and loser outcomes rapidly cut together by teams of editors, right up to the final whistle blow. Remove the narrative imperative, and the manner of arrangement is an explosion of movement in time. Douglas Gordon Phillipe Pareno's *Zidane* (2006) is a balletic rendering of a single football match, shot from twenty-four camera viewpoints, each lens concentrating on the body of the footballer at the expense of the wider spectacle of the match. The event of a goal, of winning or losing even, is peripheral to the thick description of the movements and expressions of one of the twenty-two players.

Striving for the indexical similarity of secondness and the realism of thirdness in the factual film tends to preclude the enablement of genuinely novel thoughts and thought arrangements. We may in some instances feel informed by documentaries, and accurate factual information remains paramount to our cooperation and well being as social beings, but the manner in which we are informed is, for the most part, an exaggerated and exhausted version of established schemas, which, as Alain Badiou writes, 'are cited and submitted to a hystericization of their sources' (Badiou 2004: 111<sup>66</sup>). Badiou calls for a new cinematic configuration, but having listed the likes of Kiarostami, the Straubs and Godard, he says that no new film event is currently perceptible.<sup>67</sup> Certainly the cinema has yet to find its absolute nature, a possible but not yet fully actual. In the documentary, where is the very difference that animates us as distinct beings? Where is our uncertainty and our undecideability, where are our thoughts and our feelings, and where is affect and that which exceeds our ability to signify? Let us try to think of a crystalline film, one that deals with aberration and itinerancy, with interiority and excess.

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<sup>1</sup> In his book, *Reals and Representations* (1983), Ian Hacking characterizes Homo sapiens, (whom he terms *Homo depictor*) as a species defined by its need to depict. To be human, Hacking argues, is to represent the human: to make symbols and images that stand for lived experience. Hacking traces a teleology of representation back to the first cave paintings, and in doing so makes the compelling point that reality is subordinate to depiction, it is a secondary concept which came into being following the primary event of representation. The history of reality as a concept is therefore, in Hacking's view, a history of sign making, of semiotics, where the image forms the centre of our construction as subjects, not merely within our perception, but as *gest* and as mark. Representations are likenesses, and these likenesses are by definition publicly shared subjectivities prone to shifting attitudes based on cultural assumptions about what is realistic. And so realism is merely a category, a shifting mode subject to the fashions and points-of-view of the day, and representation is a wider mode, which informs realism and compels the human subject to produce increasingly more complex marks. See Hacking. 1983: 132-136.

<sup>3</sup> After all, a written account of an event does not have to look like the event, and a pencil drawing of a subject is still a record of the encounter between draftsman and subject, and may even appear to render a likeness to what we see, even though there are no "lines" on or around the actual subject.

<sup>4</sup> Bazin, *What is Cinema?* Vol 1: 13.

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<sup>7</sup> This pluralism of realities is of note, given Einstein's *Special and General Theory of Relativity*, Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit*, and Picasso's experiments with multiple perspectives and collage within the picture plane. Around the same time that Picasso was breaking new ground in two-dimensional art. At the beginning of the twentieth century Picasso made claims to a perceptual realism released from the confines of perspective and mechanization. Bazin sees Picasso at the apex of a shift that began in the mid-nineteenth century, one that gradually moved away from this resemblance complex. Bazin writes of the fundamental principle of the (Egyptian) statuary: 'the preservation of life by a representation of life,' (Bazin, *What is Cinema?* Vol 1: 10) and of the history of the plastic arts as the story of resemblance, of realism.

<sup>8</sup> Charles Peirce writes on the indexicality of the photographic medium that 'Photographs, especially instantaneous photographs, are very instructive, because we know that in certain respects they are exactly like the objects they represent. But this resemblance is due to the photographs having been produced under such circumstances that they were physically forced to correspond point by point to nature. In that respect then, they belong to the second class of signs, those by physical connection' (Charles Peirce, quoted in Nichols. 1991: 149).

<sup>9</sup> Bazin observes that 'All the arts are based on the presence of man, only photography derives an advantage from his absence. Photography affects us like a phenomenon in nature, like a flower or a snowflake whose vegetable or earthly origins are an inseparable part of their beauty [...] This production by automatic means has radically affected our psychology of the image [...] Photography enjoys a certain advantage in virtue of this transference of reality from the thing to its reproduction' (Bazin, *What is Cinema?* Vol 1: 13-14).

<sup>12</sup> See, *Change Mummified: Cinema, Historicity, Theory*, Philip Rosen. Univ of Minnesota Pr. 2001.

<sup>13</sup> Peirce suggests that the connection between an image and the real is not one of representation but one of *implication*, in that the sign points towards the observable and implies the real, rather than ever accurately depicting it. Deleuze favours Peirce's theories because they steer away from the principle of mediation' and language as agents of separation, where signs intercede between thought and reality and thereby create a disjuncture in experience.<sup>13</sup> Signs are instead multiple and flexible, and language is only the most conventional category. There are abstract signs, emergent signs (physiological response to events) and conventional signs (language), each a different mode in which the real appears, what Peirce terms *firstness*, *secondness*, and *thirdness*.

<sup>14</sup> Grierson filmed the shots of the interior of the carriage where the mail is sorted in a studio. An impression of movement was given by gently swinging the string that was hanging down from the top of the sorting boxes before each shot was filmed and telling the postal workers to walk with a rolling gait.

<sup>15</sup> Films such as the 23-part *Kino Pravda* (*Cinema Truth*, 1922-25) metaphorically inter-cut candid-camera footage with extracts from pre-revolutionary features. Soviet Marxist ideology attempted to effectively reverse the definition of realism, saying realism showed dynamic reality and essential historical movements beneath surface appearance, whilst still depicting the working class subject as champion of the real. Vertov later used prismatic



lenses, dissolves, micro-cinematography, split screen, multiple impositions, tints, animation, and staccato editing, thus disregarding reality and entering the realm of cine-poetry.

<sup>16</sup> Deleuze writes that 'This is the first big difference between classical and modern cinema. For in classical cinema, the people are there, even though they are oppressed, tricked, subject, even though blind or unconscious. Soviet cinema is an example: the people are already there in Eisenstein, who shows them performing a qualitative leap in *The General Line (Old and New)* [...] and in Vertov and Dovzhenko, in two different ways, there is a unanimity which calls the different peoples into the same melting-pot from which the future emerges' (Deleuze. 1989: 216).

<sup>17</sup> These are Saussure's terms. Saussure concentrates his analysis on the structures of *langue*, which are more systematic. Bakhtin reverses this, by giving privilege to *parole* utterances, and resisting the structural project to isolate all language as catalogued. During the 1970's linguistic theorists began to examine data that was naturally occurring. Post-structural linguistics developed from Bakhtin's writings on *parole*, in resistance to how structural linguistics concentrates on the scientific paradigm of language as determinable and systematic. On this subject, Michel de Certeau writes that, 'Gilbert Ryle, borrowing Saussure's distinction between *langue* (a system) and *parole* (an act), compared the former to a fund of capital and the latter to the operations it makes possible: on the one hand, a stock of material, on the other, transactions and uses' (De Certeau. 1984: 32-3).

<sup>18</sup> Rodowick writes that 'Classical cinema participated in its own way in representing the teleological becoming of the people as identical with the ineluctable unfolding of history' (D.N. Rodowick 1992: 152).

<sup>19</sup> As might be evidenced by the polemic of Michael Moore's recent films *Bowling for Columbine* (2002) and *Fahrenheit 911* (2004), both of which deploy emotive strategies of direct engagement (for instance, Moore arriving unannounced at various institutions) and discriminatory editing in the pursuit of a highly pre-conceived argument, albeit under the guise of an apparently open-hypothesis, journalistic mode. Moore may present his film as interactive in that they ostensibly involve a series of unforeseen events, but his work is primarily expository, rhetorically organized to support his thesis and to ensure that there is no ambiguity in terms of audience interpretation. Moore lifts from the anti-expository rhetoric of the 1960s Direct Cinema movement merely in terms of an authentic image for his argument (i.e., as open hypothesis, rather than polemic), and yet we continually see images that serve as illustration to Moore's commentary, using what Nichols calls 'rhetorical continuity' in editing, utilizing material from headlines and footage from local news much in the same way as a scratch video maker might<sup>19</sup>. In fact, Moore introduces home movie material and cable news items in his films to signify the superior 'truth' of the personal and the local.

<sup>20</sup> See Barnouw, Erik (1993) *Documentary: A History of the Non-Fiction Film* (2nd revised edition), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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<sup>21</sup> See also Stella Bruzzi's derisive critique of Nichols' taxonomy in *New Documentary, A critical introduction*. Routledge, 2000.

<sup>22</sup> Amos Poe speaking at *Living Documents, Real Lives in Documentary*, Oct 28 2003, NFT London.

<sup>23</sup> Nichols sites Eileen McGarry's analysis of Fred Wiseman's films, such as *High School* (1968) in which the filmmaker, following a self-imposed code of objectivity, often treats his institutionalized subjects with the same cold and detached manner as the institutions they work within. See, Nichols 1991: 13.

<sup>24</sup> Kiarostami, interviewed by Philip Lopate, *Film Comment*, July-August 1999: 39

<sup>25</sup> Metz said that verisimilitude is the mark of film as a medium, in that it so palpably resembles the lived world without ever being mistakable for that real world.

<sup>26</sup> In the documentary, it is only dramatic accompanying musically scored phrases and the clarity of voice of the speaking subject that have anything like an assertive stance as sonic elements, although at times poor sound is deployed as a device, particularly in the docudrama, as a hallmark of legitimacy. In the collection *Conventions of Sound in Documentary* (Ed. Rick Altman 1992) Jeffrey K. Ruoff draws attention to 'Fuzzy sound' that has come to be read as authentic – seeming to be as 'pro-sonic' - in the documentary film image. (Ruoff 1992: 224-5).

<sup>28</sup> *Drinking for England*, lyrics: Simon Armitage; music: Michael Conn.

<sup>29</sup> In the context of her writing on Reality TV, Jane Roscoe has drawn attention to moments she calls, 'flickers of authenticity,' in which the mask of performance falls away from the Reality TV contestant/ participant. Her phrase deliberately recalls Barthes' notion of the 'punctum' and Brecht's 'alienation effect,' (Jane Roscoe, *Real Entertainment: New Factual Hybrid Television*, Media International Australia 100 (2001): 9-20. Roscoe and Paget go on to describe the *Drinking for England* participants as 'self-fashioners,' who 'reveal a more complex identity through their *idiolect* – the 'voice' (Paget & Roscoe, *Giving voice, Performance and authenticity in the documentary musical*). <http://www.ejumpcut.org/currentissue/MusicalDocy/index.html>).

<sup>30</sup> Errol Morris's film *The Thin Blue Line* (1988) uses the concept of a highly stylized interview aesthetic in which all interviewees are shot with the same camera and lens, and in the same focal relational distance to their background. This is a decision based on creating equality of presence and the standardization of voice.

<sup>31</sup> Nichols. 1991: 150.

<sup>32</sup> See D.N. Rodowick, *Reading the Figural, or, Philosophy after the New Media* (Duke University Press, 2001).

<sup>33</sup> One example of the myth of real-time as index of fact is the NY Times Square broadcast on the eve of the new Millennium. Rival television channels, broadcasting what they claimed were live images, filtered live feeds through real-time processing software that digitally matted-in advertisements for their channels, wiping over rival advertisements on display on actual video billboards in the square. Video realism, or reality TV, is the current vanguard of truthfulness. We are given to understand that amateur video is more truthful than highly produced and

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constructed television, and the same, ubiquitously, applies to surveillance camera imagery. But the diary film and the web camera eye are just as culpable constructions of authenticity as the fiction film shot on 35mm, both applying variations of self-censorship, framing, editing, and contexts for reading.

<sup>34</sup> *The Evil Demon of Images*, Baudrillard's lecture on film given in the Inaugural Mari Kuttna Memorial Lecture at the University of Sydney, Australia in 1987. ISBN 0 909952 08 5. Now out of print.

<sup>35</sup> In many ways the current phenomena of Reality TV passes the problem back to the viewer, supposedly democratizing what is depicted by having viewers vote for who is most real, or most 'like us.' As Clare Fox has observed, 'Reality TV shares a particular idea of what reality is. The real in TV terms involves *removal* from society' (Clare Fox of *The Institute of Ideas*, speaking at *The Eternal Frame* conference, FACT 2003).

<sup>36</sup> In *The Political Unconscious* (1981) Frederick Jameson writes that history is, "Not a text, not a narrative, master or otherwise, but that, as an absent cause, it is inaccessible to us accept in textual form, in that our approach to it and to the real itself necessarily passes through its prior textualization, its narrativization in the political unconscious. See also, Michel Foucault, *Film and Popular Memory*, in Johnston, 1977 (especially on the workers documentary film).

<sup>37</sup> There is the example of the mother of the American soldier who asked George W. Bush to broadcast the image of her son's coffin arriving back on US soil. This request was declined.

<sup>38</sup> The operatives had taken direct influence from Jerry Bruckheimer's *Black Hawk Down*, with Bruckheimer himself acting as an advisor to the Pentagon primetime Reality TV series *Profiles from the front line*.

<sup>39</sup> In Pasolini's use of free-indirect discourse, the utterances of the film are particular to the context and performed behaviour in the present tense of the film as it was made. Actors and non-actors cross between various diegetic and non-diegetic film environs, both realism and narrative affect are eschewed. See Pasolini. 1988: 175.

<sup>41</sup> See Nichols 1985. Vol. I: 542-548.

<sup>42</sup> In *l'effet de reel* (*The Reality Effect*, anthologized in *The Rustle of Language*, Roland Barthes [1989]) Roland Barthes speaks of the way that superfluous detail and unrelated dialog can enhance the diegetic sense of realism in a narrative. Pasolini and Rossellini's use of dialect in this way did serve to enhance the film's verisimilitude, confirming, as Jonathan Culler writes, the 'mimetic contract' and assuring the reader 'that he can interpret the text as about a real world,' (*Saussure's Theory of Language*, in Jonathan Culler, *Saussure* Fontana, 1976).

<sup>43</sup> Interestingly, Bakhtin is a 'cultural sleeper,' whose academic research surfaced many years after he was writing.

<sup>44</sup> See, De Certeau 1984: 33.

<sup>46</sup> András Bálint Kovács, paraphrased, speaking at *Time@20*, Deleuze conference, Harvard 2005.

<sup>47</sup> Žižek, *From Purification to Subtraction: Badiou and the Real*, in *Think Again, Alain Badiou and the future of Philosophy*, Ed. Peter Hallward. (2004)

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<sup>48</sup> In *Francis Bacon: the Logic of Sensation* (Deleuze 1981), Deleuze lists three modes of modern art in terms of their relation to, or rejection of, the representational. The first deals with pure geometric abstraction, where creativity is reduced to sterility, and the viewer is left without movement to think. The second mode of modern art practice is abstract expressionism, what Deleuze regards as a disorganized mess. The third (and here Deleuze finds Francis Bacon as the exemplar), is where the figural is ripped apart; where art is "the grin without a cat," (From Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* (year). *The grin without a cat*, is also the English translation of Chris Marker's *Le fond de l'air est rouge*, 1977), an encounter with the limit of possibility.

<sup>50</sup> Peter Hallward paper, *On Deleuze and the philosophy of Creation* (Institut Francais, Petite Salle, May 25 2006)

<sup>53</sup> Many of these concepts Deleuze develops from Bergson's *Creative Evolution*. The mind first and foremost wants to manipulate all matter in terms of the limit of its possibility. Impossible images come from the possible, however. An intellect orders and makes intelligible the chaos of the lived world, manipulating form in terms of productivity and function. An instinct reacts to the lived world in terms of the essential: avoiding danger, for example. For Bergson, all things in the world are images, but artists actualize these images, using intuition - the thing that becomes available to human consciousness when it does not require the totality of intellect and instinct in tandem. Intuition is the propensity for the human mind to reorganize duration without desired outcome and to manipulate form, either physically or mentally, merely because it can. Intuition resides in the gap between the familiar and the unfamiliar, the interior and exterior of our experience. In Deleuze's view, the artist actualizes this gap as an image. The filmmaker, for example, works with affects, because what he or she records is not entirely gestured by their own hand; something of the image (if it is not computer generated) is uttered independently of the author, in the flow of time before the lens. This is Pasolini's argument when he says that the filmmaker writes the real with the real.

<sup>54</sup> D.N. Rodowick, from a lecture given at the Photographers Gallery London, 2003.

<sup>55</sup> The finite and the infinite are the same in Deleuze's philosophy, which is therefore not a platonic idea of art as the imperfect copy. A work of art is not a copy of the real, it is as real as the thing, and so, for Deleuze, the cinema does not represent the real, it is as real as the real. The work of art represents difference (differences within reality and between 'realities') not similarity. There is no original thing. The only original thing is the small difference in repetition. The work of art is identical with chaos.

<sup>56</sup> Adrian Miles, *Technologies of Memory*, quoted by B.C. Holmes in, *The Deleuzian Memory of Sans Soleil*. <http://www.bcholmes.org/film/sanssoliel.html>. Updated May 2000.

<sup>57</sup> Rodowick writes that 'This is a historical image that invents a future by creatively transforming occluded elements of the past' (Rodowick 1997: 153).

<sup>58</sup> Chris Marker is himself *missing* in the sense that photographs of the filmmaker are extremely rare. Marker is renowned for his secrecy and for inventing mythologies about his history, identity and practice.

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<sup>59</sup> This is in fact the aim of phenomenology, to address the irreducible 'thickness' of human experience.

<sup>60</sup> This idea of a vertical cinema also related to the Saussure's distinction between a structural linguistics that was *diachronic* and one that was *synchronic*. Saussure believed that the etymology of a word does not affect its current meaning, and argued for a linguistics that was synchronic, or "with time," describing language in terms of how it worked in everyday life. However, Saussure stated that the object of this linguistics must be language as an underlying symbolic system (*langue*) and not speech (*parole*), which was merely surface utterance.

<sup>62</sup> Adorno, *Minimia Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*, quoted in *Change Mummified: Cinema, Historicity, Theory*, Philip Rosen 2001: 147.

<sup>64</sup> Visit, [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com).

<sup>66</sup> Alain Badiou writes that, 'Artistic activity can only be discerned in a film as a process of purification of its own immanent non-artistic character [...] the cinema is a place of intrinsic indiscernibility between art and non-art. No film, strictly speaking, is controlled by artistic thinking from beginning to end - it always bears absolutely impure elements within it, drawn from ambient imagery, from the detritus of other arts, and from conventions with a limited shelf life' (Badiou 2004. 111).

<sup>67</sup> Bazin once famously claimed that the cinema had not yet been invented. Peter Greenaway has recently reiterated this, and the recent book *Future Cinema, The Cinematic Imaginary After Film* (Ed. Jeffrey Shaw and Peter Weibel 2003) offers speculation about a future cinema which incorporates new electronic media. This hybrid cinema melds montage, traditional cinema, experimental literature, television, video, and the net. Such a new cinematic form suggests that traditional cinema no longer has the capacity to represent events that are themselves complex configurations of experience, interpretation, and interaction.

# Filmmaker is out 'cinema busking'

By MARGERY HOOKINGS

A FILMMAKER is in Bridport looking for a subject.

Steven Eastwood, 33, is in town over the next month for an Arts Council-funded project working with Bridport's PVA MediaLab.

He plans to use everyday occurrences and complete strangers as material in a conceptually-led moving image that he describes as "cinema busking".

Part of the project will involve filming in Rucky Doo Square but with a "street cam" instead of actors.

"I'm really letting Bridport steer me," he said.

Steven, from east London, says the project is more about the filmmaking process than the film itself.

"I have been walking around with my clapperboard and marking my little crosses with the idea that someone might arrive on them," he said. "I have set myself the task of finding a subject and I want the subject to find me."

He has been out and about in the town, in pubs and out into the countryside.

"I am very interested in a person's expectation of what a film is going to be. I'm interested in the mundane and what's exceptional in that."

Steven has been an independent filmmaker for 10 years, working between fiction and documentary and sees his project at Bridport as a coming together of the two.

He thinks he will have found his subject in about a week and then plans to work in collaboration with them.

"They will be able to impose their own will on what is made," he said.

The subject might not be a person - it could be a place.

"A lot of people think about location, about the resonance of the land. The landscape is a reason why a lot of people stay here and the land seems to be rich in stories."

The end result will probably be about 30 minutes long and Steven plans to have a screening in the town to show it.



LOOKING FOR A STREET CAST:

Steven Eastwood will be in Bridport over the next month on an Arts Council-funded project working with the town's PVA MediaLab.

Picture: JOHN GURD B2491

**X-STITCH, WOOL AND TAPESTRY**

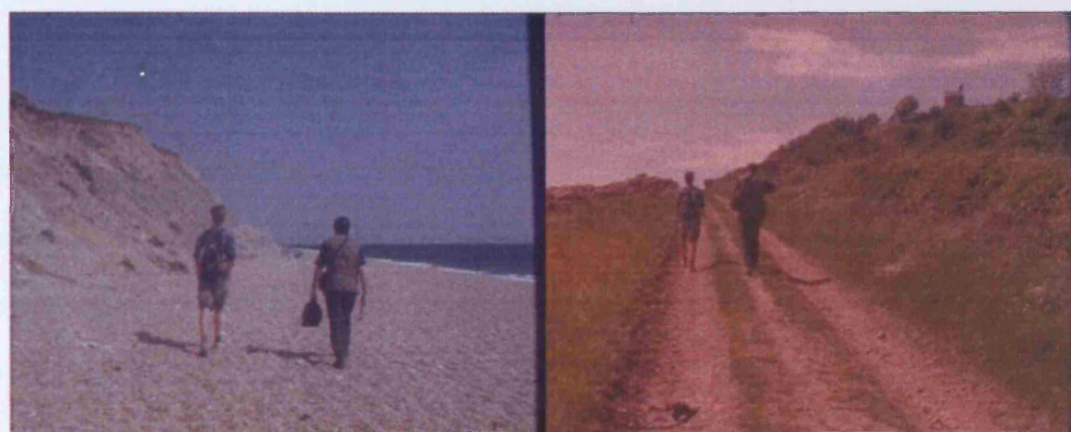
•MASSIVE STOCK LIQUIDATION •  
WENDY, ROBIN, EMU, TWILLEYS  
CRAFT COLLECTION, DISNEY, ETC ETC.

**Art work on show in store**

As for *The Film*, yes, I absolutely wanted to take some of the reflexive and self-referential ideas from *Of Camera* and apply them to an actuality. I said to Roy and Arrun that I wanted to drape film over the town like a veil. Together we lived that film and everything we did was about that film. Of course, our stomachs rumbled when hungry and the trees still swayed in the wind, just as they would if that veil wasn't there, but I think as far as our perception and ideation goes, we were at times seeing that swaying and feeling that rumbling within the frame which we called *The Film*. I'm trying to use film as a way of pointing to the lived, without describing it. I want to see what it is like to live filmmaking. This is perhaps an abstract concept, but I discussed with Roy how filmmaking might be comparable to his walking - another way of confronting the real without showing it or telling it.

(Steven Eastwood, from an email sent to filmmaker Alan Rhodes)







How can we speak of inventing a people, or enabling the creative becoming of a people not-yet-here, without running into the same problems of defining a teleologically rooted collective subject? In his two Cinema books, Deleuze resists any temptation to propose a cine practice by which a people might group themselves, his objective being, rather, to speak to the cinematographic apparatus as a virtual capable of engendering new thought. For Deleuze, it is the possibility for new and creative thought that will lead to the formation of a 'people.' But it is perhaps an oversight on Deleuze's part that he concentrates on what *has been* written, what *has been* painted, what *has been* filmed, rather than on the present situation of writing, of painting, of *filmmaking*. His concept for the emergence of a missing people finds illustration in the less intense entity of the completed film, precisely that which Deleuze, when speaking of the art object, says is left when the rhizome has reduced in momentum.

In fact, very little film theory or philosophy of any kind gives analysis to the situation of filmmaking, and yet this would seem to be a fertile space for the becoming of a people, precisely because the representation (if that is the intention of the film) is still half-formed. The potency of a concept as event (its expression as action) is strangest during its midpoint, between idea and conclusion: not what we desire for our film then, but how we desire in our filmmaking. The shoot and the edit are the rhizome in every live-action film production, where the originating idea and the final screened outcome are deemphasized. What kind of a tactic for filmmaking could produce a rhizome cine practice, one that committed my thoughts and my body to the *not-yet* of a film in process and allowed for parole utterances? Clearly, a tactic which was temporary in application, one which, to use Michel De Certeau's term, *rented space in the place of the other*, (De Certeau 1984) which in this sense is the dominant order of the documentary or the fiction film; a minor cinema therefore, speaking in the voice of the other that has attempted to represent a people. This tactic would be accidental, adrift, contingent.

And so I sought out a residency in an unfamiliar place, spending May 2004 in the town of Bridport on the south coast of England. It was there and during this period that *The Film* (2004) was recorded. With hindsight, *The Film* is in many ways a response to, or more accurately a reaction to *Of Camera*. *Of Camera* depicted, through fiction, the situation of becoming the film itself: a woman discovers her own mediation on videotape, and encounters her estranged partner's degrading celluloid. *The Film* presents a factual experience of mediation. It is only this experience - of filmmaking - that is in any way represented. It follows the emergent process of embodying the event of filmmaking as a drift, in which a small group of people who were recently strangers called a film into their minds as they wandered and recorded. We walked our way to the film that was in front of us, through disused cinemas, across hilltops and along beaches, via allotments, into a camera shop and out of the town. The moving image was an imagined veil directed towards the actual in order to inventively encounter and make alterations to its emergent and contingent properties.

As a means to head nowhere with this potential film I adopted the Situationist tactic of the *dérive*, which is the direct action of wandering without purpose or goal.<sup>1</sup> De Certeau says that those who drift in this manner, 'trace indeterminate trajectories that are apparently meaningless, since they do not cohere with the constructed, written, and pre-fabricated space through which they move' (de Certeau 1984: 34). The *dérive* provides a method for reclaiming place as space, and reclaiming time as not delineated in terms of the duality of work or leisure. It is typically a means to differently encounter an urban space, but this drift would be a wandering off from both a township (Bridport) and an established way of filmmaking. To walk purposelessly is to lack a place, to be absent. Most walks are in search of a proper, commonly either a destination, or the proper that is the consumption of leisure time as perambulation.<sup>2</sup>

Drawing upon the tactic of the *dérive* in this text, I am going to approach the 'telling' of this film and its successor, *The Film We Didn't Make* (2006), in a discontinuous form, rather than

observing a teleology of events or an historical unfolding. This is how the films were made, by creating tears in the fabric of documentary and fissures in the ordering of cinematic exposition. So, in the place of describing the content of the films I will try to make a space where we might regard the various procedural, spatial and temporal attributes of each.

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This nowhere gives a tactic mobility, to be sure, but a mobility that must accept the chance offerings of the moment, and seize on the wing the possibilities that offer themselves at any given moment.

(De Certeau 1984: 37)

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My intention in Bridport was not to make a film about a person or a place and I had no desire to find a subject matter, or even to complete a film. Instead I sought to collaborate with somebody who would enter into what I would later term a "lived film," a film realized in a manner entirely alien to me, and as far from the rigid production schema of *Of Camera* as possible. The first step was to be unlike or other than myself. Arriving as a stranger, I spent the month drifting, wandering the environs of the town without plan or direction, looking for strangers, hoping to find collaborators through unofficial and non-institutional means and to make a film with them. The drift tactic would ensure that schematic production could not take place, in that, when wandering, the very absence of delimitation creates the conditions necessary for emergence.<sup>3</sup> I frequented cafes, pubs and the town square; marking gaffer taped 'T' positions for people to potentially hit, leaving a film clapperboard face up on the pavement with the word "Real" written on it. This was what I termed *cinema busking*, an inversion of street casting, in that I was purposefully casting out, with no opinion about whom I would find. I considered introducing inactive film apparatus into these social situations - lights, cables, tripods - in the way that I had done in the *Cinema into the Real* tests,<sup>4</sup> but opted to replace this with a more passive form of intervention and coercion.<sup>5</sup> Rather than directing people to hit a mark and stand beneath a bright film light as a tram or bus arrived, I was now making a mark and waiting to see if my collaborator would simply arrive on it.

This attempt to occupy an emergent film process, one that involves others, brings about a direct encounter with the assumptions any person makes about the nature and outcome of the filmmaking process, and, although I had no plan, I wanted to discover what assumptions the presence of a filmmaker in the town would produce. Just what kind of an interpretive community was Bridport? Some people, depending upon their motivations and their prior knowledge, are willing to have their image enter the idiom of media (television, cinema, or art). Others are suspicious of how the agency of the filmmaker may manipulate their social everyday into a cultural product that misrepresents them. These assumptions are not without bias, the default assumption being that any film, whether a fiction or documentary, will have as its objective narrative representation, and may therefore result in misrepresentation. Reactions varied considerably; over time reluctant parties revealed their vested interest in being represented, whilst others became perturbed.<sup>6</sup> A documentary maker has special privileges when first reporting a story or investigating within a locality. Documentary maker Nick Broomfield has over a number of years carefully developed a seemingly clueless but doggedly persistent persona, *Nick Broomfield*, which he uses to gain entry to all manner of private situations. The novelty of a mediating presence such as this temporarily opens doors, but there is a limited duration to this key to the town. When a person becomes known and therefore familiar, a different set of attitudes can emerge; prejudices and privacies often replace openness.<sup>7</sup> Certainly, the relationship between a filmmaker and their subject is an extremely complex and often conflicting one. When co-mingling fictional and actual elements, and using social non-actors who are effectively 'playing themselves,' this relationship, under the name of solidarity, can throw up as many problems as more schematic representational approaches. I often thought of my process in Bridport as like a dating game: *would like to meet people who will make a film with me.*<sup>8</sup> I followed-up on every name, place or organization mentioned to me in passing. Spending evenings by myself in public houses I became aware of the complex and organic nature of social groups. To be by oneself is a destabilizing force, in that members of various social groups take note of a solitary person and feel either affronted by them or responsible for them. I tried to take a seat at group tables or on the periphery of a group. I used my notebook as a legitimizing object - writing as an activity gave

me reason to be by myself; it constituted 'company'.<sup>9</sup> However, making entries in my notebook led certain people to believe that I was reporting on their behaviour. "What are you writing about?" one woman asked probingly, the tone of her question emblematic of how many would perceive my intentions.



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a film is coming  
when the film comes we will not be in the span of this  
space, of the film's becoming  
drama is about responding to the script  
documentary is about responding to the lived world  
i am responding to the life that is the film  
the film becomes a life, but not this life

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I brought to Bridport an association of a proper practice that is the culture of the cinema and factual television, with its microbe-like operations (De Certeau<sup>10</sup>). By creating anticipation for a film that may or may not at some point in the future be produced, *The Film* rented space in the place of the documentary. I appropriated the *documentary-in-production* as an attitude and as an idea in the minds of those in and around the production, writing over the documentary by regarding filmmaking as *écriture* (Derrida<sup>11</sup>). The rental of space within the place of the other outlines a resistant mode for the innovative use of everyday life, but this rental is necessarily temporary. From this limited duration the practitioner can occupy novel forms of conduct, so long as they do not try to ensure any permanence or longevity. In the introduction to his book, De Certeau describes those who occupy space in this way as the 'non-producers' of culture. The

actions of these non-producers are unsigned, unreadable, and un-symbolized, because they occur outside the legitimization of a place. In order to be a practitioner of the space of filmmaking I resisted any compulsion towards a resolved outcome in terms of a cultural product.

De Certeau proposes that we shift emphasis from the cult of personality, of personal development and productivity, onto the directness of our engagement with the lived world. He calls for action rather than introspection, activity rather than psychoanalytical self-transformation. In order to generate the not previously thought, in order to emerge as a people, it is necessary to get outside of the symbolic and to bend flight-lines around such institutional hegemonic forces as the expositional documentary, with its over determined templates and its endless recapitulations before and after every commercial break. De Certeau differentiates a tactic from the strategies of institutions, making the point that a strategy is always in relation to a proper entity or power base. Strategy occurs in space, but tactics take place in time (de Certeau 1984: xix). Political, economic and scientific rationality has been constructed on this model, what de Certeau qualifies as the 'proper,' or the mastery of time through the foundation of a spatial and institutional localization, for example: a building, or a television broadcast.<sup>12</sup>

Classical cinema is essentially a strategy that operates from the place and economic order of the studio system, and from a language system of sense making. The very strategy of its telling is Cartesian, where will and power operates from the base of a place which is the 'industry' and the dissemination of its habitual articulations, the movement-image.<sup>13</sup> Of course, resistance is inextricably coupled to power. If classical cinema is the 'proper,' then raising a hatchet to this obstruction runs the risk of reinforcing the geometry of its forms. A revolution that begins and then ends is a closed set; it has been recuperated from its line of flight back into the power structures and hierarchies it resists. Power transforms relations of insurgent forces into territories, while resistance enables their non-fixity. And so a revolution must remain open, and to remain open, actions that are resistant must be rethought as temporary, as minor occurrences that are constant in effort. In Rodowick's reading of Deleuze, the spirit of resistance is the stirring of

intensity more willful and affirmative than that which we ordinarily live, and it is molecular, not molar in its formation.<sup>14</sup> A revolutionary undertaking is therefore to denature everyday life as it has been prescribed, by 'experimentally altering the forms of its practice,' (Ben Highmore 2001: 237). This is why Irigaray suggests articulating an *improper* language (in place of the masculine language), one whose ontology consists of multiplicities and which expresses fluidity rather than solidity.<sup>15</sup> This improper language is not alternative or oppositional. It sidesteps recuperation by remaining open to the outside through the transformation of an external space flooded by subjectivity.

In the standard procedure of film production, a film's utterances are designated as not of worth, and therefore invisible. A radical eruption in the language of film practice finds illumination and productive agitation in the fluid activity of making do, for making do has no such codes for its conduct. The tactic of the film drift deploys the very vernacular of cinema against itself and into the lived world, where it is now *improper*, and it is here, in this non-place, that a missing people can congregate. This is a film situation that does not attempt to show or to tell, but rather to emerge with a people.<sup>16</sup> The tactic makes of film an encounter with the actual, in which the nature of the encounter and the transformation of the subject determines on-screen content; it acts as a rudder that steers in the direction of a strange archipelago, where it is possible to become alien to one's origins, as filmmaker, and to a cultural history of cinema, and new to an other who is filming with you. This is what architectural theorist Markos Novak, in his paper 'Speciation, Transvergence, Allogenes: Notes on the production of the Alien' (Novak 2002), terms the state of being *alloo*, a distinctly Deleuzian and Nietzschean attitude that is, in essence, an annihilation of the past (Deleuze has written of the philosopher's task to become dead in order to make propositions about the lived<sup>17</sup>). But as a filmmaker, can one be without family, without history, and not determined by the past? Each filmmaker recapitulates, and as Deleuze observes, every film builds upon the legacy of cinema, every film sits within the manifold discourses and associations of the larger term, 'Cinema.' Each individual film operation is therefore bound up in intentions towards or away from the cinematic proper. Because of this patrimony, the filmmaker,

just like the person or people she or he seeks represent, rarely owns their own words, and this is why it is vital that they continually form new utterances. Even a hermit, as Bakhtin offers, does not own his own words; the word always comes repeatedly, 'from the mouth of another, "always half someone else. It becomes one's own only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention' (Bakhtin, quoted in Robert Stam 1989: 189). This is the credo of the amateur cinema movement, to use existing cinematic tropes to make films about their everyday lives, without desiring to enter their filmed articulations into the canon of culture or into the market place. And this too is the philosophical principle of itinerant filmmaking - to treat the cinema as a means to drift and to see, rather than to arrive and declare, because within a film drift there are film accents. Not words, accents. And a drift is the space for the possibility of affect. Something surprising emerges which was not on the map. The task, then, is to temporarily open a space from where these accents and moments of affect can emerge, whilst not entirely denying the vernacular of the cinematic. What I mean by this is to find a plane for identity as a fluid filmmaker, so as to transform language and its operations (in this sense, the shared patrimony and vernacular of cinema) instead of abandoning language altogether: to treat the cinema as a blockage that enables *film* to exist and to make this *film* the temporary space in and through which a people can emerge. On a film drift, it is possible to become as though an *other*; and here some new characters and possibilities for identity emerge.

When watching *The Film*, the viewer is following a meander in which those who are ostensibly the subjects of the film give themselves over to the situation of filmmaking and become themselves *filmmaker*. This situation and the resultant emergence of difference (the filmmaker, the subject, a people emerging) becomes the film. Jean Rouch, commonly thought of as an ethnographic filmmaker, often actively sought out situations that were unpredictable in order for there to be a more palpable relationship between filmmaker and filmed, and so that he might, through improvisation, or even through failure, become other than whom he was and is when not filming. It was Rouch's goal that the film production brought about change in the lived



world and the social situation of the protagonists. In some way, the film *helps*. As Erik Barnouw observes, 'the direct cinema documentarist took his camera to a situation of tension and waited hopefully for a crisis; the Rouch version of cinéma vérité tried to precipitate one. The direct cinema artist aspired to invisibility; the Rouch [sic] artist was often an avowed participant. The direct cinema artist played the role of uninvolved bystander; the [sic] artist espoused that of provocateur' (Barnouw. 1974: 254-255). In *Jaguar* (Rouch 1954), the filmmaker acts as a social agent, the camera is a 'Living Camera'<sup>18</sup> and the film itself is a theatre for a people. The fiction is derived from real elements, and thereby, as Gauthier comments, 'myth is introduced into reality' (Gauthier 1972: 198-99<sup>19</sup>). Grob writes that, 'In the image of his "Maîtres-fous", Rouch is a possessed filmmaker who gives birth to a veritable magic dance whose effect is to capture the moment of the real' (Grob 1962: 3<sup>20</sup>). The carnival mode, however, inevitably becomes bound with representation. Ross McElwee maneuvers around this dilemma by making himself the subject of his film. *Sherman's March* (McElwee 1986) sees the filmmaker divert from his own original historical documentary brief and concentrate instead on his life unfolding around the abortive project. In fact, the film documents most accurately the way in which McElwee's filmmaking evolves, notably in the way his camera becomes inseparable from his body, so much so that it creates both an entry point and a palpable barrier to a host of potential romantic partners. "I'm filming my life in order to have a life to film [...] My real life has fallen into the crack between myself and my film" (Ross McElwee, *Sherman's March*). McElwee's schema of desired outcome and meaning (a film about General Sherman) becomes destabilized and then lost, and his life emerges in its place as a film being made.

In this situation both filmmaker and subject enter into an altered relationship with the actual of the film being made. Abbas Kiarostami often deploys the tactic of being lost or searching, what Godfrey Cheshire calls 'the sense of a mythic quest theme shrewdly conjoined to a rugged social realism' (Cheshire 1996: 41). Kiarostami's so-called *Koker Trilogy* (*Where is the Friend's House?* [1986], *Life and Nothing More*, a.k.a *And Life Goes On* [1992], *Through the Olive Trees* [1994]) begins with the simple story of a young boy searching for his friend's house

in order to return a lost notebook. In the follow-up film, Kiarostami fictionalizes his own experience of returning to the village where he shot the first film, searching for his young cast having learned of an earthquake that has devastated the community. The third film is an account of the same director, still based on Kiarostami, directing the second film (*And Life Goes On*), now *fictionally* encountering a community in the aftermath of an earthquake's destruction (*Through the Olive Trees*). David Oubina writes of Kiarostami's Koker trilogy that 'Each film documents the one before, and in turn becomes the fictional motif for the next. In this extraordinary series of palimpsests, where each film overwrites its predecessor, Kiarostami moves constantly between the two poles of fiction and documentary: there is no clear distinction between the two registers, but rather a complex system of permutations' (Oubina 2001: 21). In these films, time and occurrence move freely between the actual and the cinematic; the event of the film being made (whether documentary or fiction), and the reenactment of actual situations the director facilitates, re-invents the everyday. Not only do non-actors play themselves, they also, by the event of the third film, play themselves playing themselves. Here, fact and fabulation interweave, and a people - the Koker villagers - participate in and in part author a new village and a new sense of themselves as villagers, by way of the loose framework of the film in production.

Agnès Varda's *The Gleaners and I* (2000) sees the filmmaker rediscover the potency of the moving image, digitally and in the palm of her hand, conjuring as she records. She does not so much speak for an under-culture of gleaners who forage the land for the wealth of its detritus, as glean herself, in videotape and in time, spiritedly picking a path through urban and rural France using the camcorder flip-out screen. The gleaners are present, but they are not made sense of. It is their practice in their everyday lives that Varda acquires. Andrew Köttling's film *Gallivant* (1996) is a free-play with the documentary form, a drift diary in which the filmmaker embarks on a road trip with Eden his daughter and Gladys his grandmother (who had not previously met). Eden, Gladys and Andrew are subjects encountering subjects, inquiring by way of the camera. Köttling clearly feels some responsibility for their lack of relationship, and sets up an elaborate four-month journey along the coastline of England, Wales and Scotland in order that they spend concentrated

time together. Their nomadic route is a shifting site for performing filmmaking, for a free-play of self as filmmaker and for the documentary travelogue reinvented as an imaginary plane. As a filmmaker, Kötting's film is his way of giving something to both Eden and Gladys, something that as a document will endure beyond both of their deaths (Gladys is ninety, and Eden has a rare condition called *Joubert's Syndrome*, which is likely to reduce her life expectancy). *Gallivant* is also Kötting's opportunity to explore an aspect of the UK that fascinates him, that of the neglected small communities on the periphery of the island, where folklore spanning a dozen centuries is still observed, although slowly disappearing. The fact that the film has two stories and two subjects, firstly, that of a family of four generations traveling together in a camper van, and secondly, an ethnographic examination of a strange and disappearing, semi-pagan England, helps propel the film narrative along but also enables the filmmaker and his crew to elicit particular responses from the subjects they meet, and from themselves as subjects. In short, each appears novel, accessible and not intrusive to the other. As mobile filmmakers, they create temporary license to encounter the other with difference, and to be other than themselves, and this in a way constitutes a people: those on the periphery of an island and the periphery of a cultural practice. Gladys and Eden are simultaneously users and makers. They are users in that their way of operating is nomadic, producing a nowhere of and from the margin or edge of the land.<sup>21</sup>

What we require, then, are certain temporary openings through which a people might imagine their own becoming. Drifts with more proliferating flight lines are needed. New, non-Euclidian maps are needed, what Hakim Bey, in *The Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism* (TAZ), calls 'psychotopographical 1:1 maps' which do not take possession of territory because they are virtually identical to the territory they depict (Bey 1985: 101). These virtual maps are ideas that make of place a space. We can think of the classical cinema and documentary as maps that act as guided tours of a subject, tours consisting entirely of highlights and noteworthy destinations or monuments. They are organized routes that make of us sightseers. What cartographies and trajectories might we find in the gap between the say-able and

the perceivable, i.e., between an image presented within a montage as factually informative and an image that is merely durational?

Bey's psycho-topographic map is the bodily drawing in time of the wandering nomadic subject; it cannot function as a template for a trajectory. It is a map drawn as it is used then discarded as useless once the drift has come to an end. This psychotopology is 'the art of *dowsing* for potential temporary autonomous zones, where revolution remains closed but the possibility for insurgency is open, and where the map too is open' (Bey 1985, *ibid*). Bey's proposal for perpetual temporary uprisings is a way of countering the inevitable hegemonic recuperation of revolution, where opposition is re-established or re-enforced as the same. This is akin to an anti-oedipal permanent revolution in Deleuze and Guattari, who suggest a break from the confines of oedipalization in order to release pre-personal possibilities. Cartographic filmmaking performs the operation of the map as thick description of a land not navigable, but thinkable, where the map is a fold in thought. Such a tactic, what Deleuze and Guattari call *nomadology*, is the practice of writing over maps, so as to discover new and proliferating cartographies, rather than to continue with an orientation through Cartesian grids. Like the handkerchief looped through a bolt and tossed into the lush fields of the Zone in Tarkovsky's *Stalker* (1979), the nomad takes off on a line of flight, the means by which a molecular being might de-territorialize. This line is not the most direct line, which would in its productivity replicate the geometries of the boundary lines of a territory. Deleuze in fact often uses the image of a diagonal line that cuts through polarized regions and ignores the binary attitude of opposites.

Nomadology has as its inspiration Nietzsche, who regarded the nomad as an inhabitant of the desert, a place where there is no history, where there are no trails and no developments, where the borders between nature and culture and between reality and fantasy are lost; where there is no centre and therefore the possibility for continuous movement. Lorraine observes that Deleuze's nomadic subject, she or he who *becomes-imperceptible* 'can set a world of becoming into motion without succumbing to the fantasy of becoming everybody/everything, if she is careful to

acknowledge the blockages that enable her to exist' (Lorraine 1999: 190). Similarly, Novak's alien islands, or archipelagos, are not yet navigable, and in any case, it is not desirable to settle on a landmass, whether, in this case, it is the fiction film, the documentary, the cinematic essay, or the artist's moving image.<sup>22</sup> It is preferable to move in between these continents, island hopping from actual to virtual and back again, becoming lost, forgetting how to make films in order to give birth to an alien filmmaker inside. This cinema uses artifice to invent spaces, it contravenes established lines, weaving and leaping, leading and misleading.

The physical space of the film before it has arrived, in other words the pre and pro-filmic space of its production, which includes the bodies of the cast and crew as filming is taking place, or is about to take place, and the geographic situation around this event. Werner Herzog advocates the sheer physical effort of film production, forcing his cast and crew through impenetrable jungle and on arduous journeys into desert wastes, on purposefully foolhardy projects whose objects are nearly always unattainable.<sup>23</sup> The impossible task of the endeavour to film creates sweat, exhaustion and trauma, and this forms the dominant attributes of the finished film. In Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* (1979) actor Martin Sheen has a breakdown on camera (and a subsequent heart attack) but the director continues rolling, and propels the entire production to near collapse. Breakdowns, broken limbs, sickness, exhaustion, near death and death, connote a particularly masculine approach, where filmmaking must be a feat. Whether testosterone fuelled Herculean attitude or fluid exploration of shooting film, this space is the complex and determined body where a film is being made, or from where, at least, we may imagine a film will be made.

We are heading towards a definition for this film tactic, although it is important to resist its fixity. Let us call it *film*, which is neither the maintenance of an order and unity as exemplified by Hollywood, nor the "eviction" of narrative as argued over by the structural-materialist filmmakers in and around the two film co-ops (London [LFC] and New York of the 1960s and 1970s. *film* is the mental and behavioural negotiation of the lived world and the not-lived world

of the film we imagine to come. But more than this, it is the encounter of a blurring between these distinctions, the *oneiric* and crystalline mental negotiation of past-text, present-text and possible-text. *film* is one means by which the lived world can be (re)-envisioned outside of habitual regimes of meaning - the application of a moving image poetry as a *becoming*. This tactic is a 'calculated action determined by the absence of a proper focus' (De Certeau 1985: 36-37); it cannot count on a proper or schema, 'nor thus on a borderline distinguishing the other as a visible totality' (de Certeau, *ibid*). To *film* in this way is to be with friends and with strangers, and to use the world-like representational apparatus of the camera in the lived world, the boundaries of which are temporarily dissolved by the filmmaking act. The film tactic makes of the people filmmakers, who go out into the lived world with the exuberant task of denaturing its properties, choosing to choose to make films from the itinerant place of the film's very difference to the world, and to the way we live and think in it. These are nomadic filmmakers, who occupy thoughts given by the body of an emergent filmmaking process. This tactic is an art of becoming lost in a film operation between production and exhibition, between intention and chaos, between a film thought and an act of filmmaking. The film itself, even if it is finished, remains, paradoxically, an open-set, because the most accurate definition of the tactic is that the film is perpetually in front of whomever is filming. In and around Bridport, *film* is the frame we placed over the real and we called it *The Film*, a frame that has no pre-filmic space because the film is always and everywhere; we simply set its duration. *The Film* is an attempt to film in the everyday space of a missing people rather than from the place of those representing a people.



*The Film* (2004)

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<sup>1</sup> In Situationist theory (e.g., Guy Debord 1961), the everyday as a category has traditionally been the marginal zone of the working class, and a context regarded as culturally empty by the educated classes. As is noted in de Certeau (1984) and the writings and propositions of the (SI), it is notoriously difficult to speak of or theorize these everyday tactics without their entering the ranks of the other that this practice critiques. It is even problematic to document the events emerging from such a tactic, without drawing attention to them (and therefore rendering them as spectacle) and forcing them to take on the value of art object or commodity. Moreover, it is difficult to practice these tactics with intention or with desired outcome. Debord regarded the moving image as having to be reclaimed by users of the everyday, in counter to the cinema as spectacle. This spectacle – Hollywood, and its derivatives - created a mode of double production: the produced film text and the production of a mode of consumption within the viewer.

<sup>2</sup> De Certeau's argument is that the proper belongs to the city, where every point is a destination, which is precisely why the Situationist *dérive* is essentially an urban practice, where its impropriety has greatest potency.

<sup>3</sup> I make a connection between this tactic of *dérive* and Deleuze's philosophy in that drifting, in the new wave ballad or voyage form, is regarded as prompting a loosening of the sensory-motor link, giving rise to pure optical and sound situations that are not anchored by the momentum of characters caught up in the advancing story. Deleuze (1989: 9) equates the French New wave with *flâneury*, with their strolls and unconcerned events. German cinema of the 1970s presented existential drifts, in Wenders' *Kings of the Road* (1976), and cinema as a physical thrust in the direction of the impossible, in Herzog's *Aguirre, The Wrath of God* (1973). However, these perambulations are more schematic than the tactic I am proposing.

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<sup>4</sup> See *Cinema into the Real* ` Act One Sc 6, *Bleed - some unknown bodies without organs*.

<sup>5</sup> Simon Poulter of PVA commented 'You have an acute intervention into process, a kind of 'new slackness!'

<sup>6</sup> Several willing participants withdrew from filming having come to a conclusion that their image and identity were going to be mocked in some way, or moreover, fearing that the film might bring unwanted attention to private areas of their lives and the lives of their friends. A consistent problem I encountered was negotiating how much to explain of my process and intentions. Should I say that I wanted this film to head nowhere and be without content? Does explaining constitute framing, or positioning and create a hierarchy between the people I meet and myself?

<sup>7</sup> In the period of drifting which led up to the shoot I had met several people willing to work as crew on the production. Carlos Guarita, a political and ethnographic stills photographer, originally from Portugal but now a resident in Bridport, took an interest in the project and agreed to operate camera. He had a particular fascination with the disappearing folklore of the region, and I identified that this approach to filmmaking would provide a challenging counter to my own. Carlos had never shot 16mm before, and this was also of use to me. He would ask where the camera should be positioned and I would answer that it did not matter. It was a point of concept to arrive at committing to recording an

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image by accident. Werner Herzog once asked a friend and fellow climber, who had never worked in cinema, to shoot a feature film for him: *Woyzeck* (Herzog 1979).

<sup>8</sup> This could have been an elaborate performance, based around the cult of personality of a filmmaker, mid-endeavour, who is nothing more than a cipher, a player of people and of moments, who befriends, seeks confidants and uses the charm and leverage of the outsider. I did meet a large number of people: Linda and Mutter, Cressida, Nikki, Hunky and Jim, Martin and Jules, Humphrey, Trisha, Jake, Carlos, Jess, The Town Clerk, Ian, Peter, Margery, Andy Head, Joan in the Square, Bernard Gale, Rachel and John, Roy and Arrun, Doug, Carlos and Jess.

<sup>9</sup> In fact, the company I kept was the idea of the film I would make, and often a filmmaker can treat the *camera as company*, as legitimizing object. She or he is not glaringly alone because they have a camera with them. This is the case in Agnes Varda's *The Gleaners and I* (2000), in Jonathon Caouette's *Tarnation* (2003), and for Timothy Treadwell, the subject of Werner Herzog's *Grizzly Man* (2005).

<sup>10</sup> De Certeau declares that, 'the goal is to perceive and analyze the microbe-like operations proliferating within technocratic structures and deflecting their functioning by means of a multitude of "tactics" articulated in the details of everyday life' (De Certeau 1984: xiv).

<sup>11</sup> This tactic not only involves drifting, but also *détournement*, another methodology of the Situationist International, more simply understood as sampling.

<sup>12</sup> De Certeau (1984: 117) makes a distinction between space (*espace*) and place (*lieu*). A place is an actual geography and an indication of stability. Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it. 'The reading of space becomes simultaneously the re-writing of space: 'their trajectories form unforeseeable sentences, partly unreadable paths across space [...] the trajectories trace out the ruses of other interests and desires that are neither determined nor captured by the systems in which they develop' (De Certeau 1984: xviii).

<sup>13</sup> Classical cinema qualifies the moving image as an *operation*, because it adds something to pre-existing codes (primarily those of narrative, in the sense of the theatre or the novel, neither of which have much in common with the temporality of the unedited or edited moving image). De Certeau differentiates operations from actions of immediacy; one is productive, the other resists entry into power relations of productivity. A cinema of immediacy does not recognize the market place nor does it attempt to gain a position in it.

<sup>14</sup> This is where Deleuze is distinctly anti-Hegelian. It is out of the self-organizing activities of the molecular politics of difference that the possibilities of majoritarian politics for a mass movement can arise. The concept of permanent revolution runs through Deleuze and Guattari's philosophy, which is counter hegemonic and against monadism.

<sup>15</sup> Lorraine writes that, 'If we were to examine the properties of fluids, she argues, we would discover that as a physical reality, fluids resists adequate symbolization and serve as a constant reminder of the powerlessness of the logic of solids to represent all of nature's characteristics' (Tamsin Lorraine, *Deleuze and Irigaray Experiments in Visceral Philosophy*: 63). See also, Irigaray, *The Mechanics of Fluids*, in *This Sex which is Not One* [1977] 1985 : 212.



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<sup>16</sup> Although, when completed, the film tactic often returns to the order of the place of theatrical presentation.

<sup>17</sup> Novak writes that 'While convergence and divergence are simple linear extrapolations that proceed by strategies of alignment, transvergence advances translinearly, by tactics of derailment [...] transvergence recognises true statements to be islands in an alien archipelago, sometimes only accessible by leaps, flights, and voyages on vessels of artifice' (Novak 2002).

<sup>18</sup> Jean Rouch, quoted in Eaton (ed.) *Anthropology-Reality-Cinema*: 51.

<sup>19</sup> Gauthier (1972, 198-99), quoted in Paul Stoller, *The Cinematic Griot*. 1992: 138.

<sup>20</sup> Grob (1962, 3) quoted in Paul Stoller, *The Cinematic Griot*. 1992: 152.

<sup>21</sup> In one scene, we see in close-up the filmmaker's grandmother Gladys and daughter Eden in a rowing boat, with voice just off camera from the filmmaker. The sequence then cuts to a long shot of the same boat some fifty or more feet from the shoreline, but with no camera operator on board. The camera has moved to another vantage point, stopping and starting the actions of the on-screen social actors in order to realize an aesthetic. The documentary maker is just as likely to use these devices as the fiction filmmaker, both of whom make claims to realism from different vantage points.

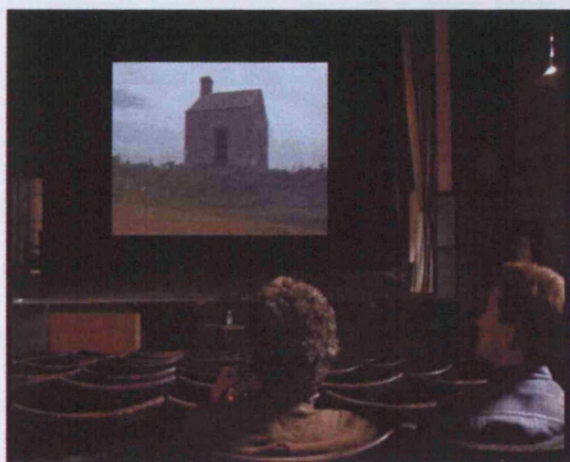
<sup>22</sup> Although, given the landmasses of contemporary culture, this would be vocationally sensible. Certainly, the way that culture and commerce operate, it is often advisable to gain recognition for one practice rather than shift as a point of principle between practices. Work of innovation tends to ignore delimitation by category, although it may not be so widely culturally visible.

<sup>23</sup> Herzog has proposed a film school where applicants would first have to walk 3,000 miles in order to prove they possessed sufficient physical strength and mental determination to be accepted as students.

Some characters, caught in certain pure optical and sound situations, find themselves condemned to wander about or go off on a trip. These are pure seers, who no longer exist except in the interval of movement, and do not even have the consolation of the sublime, which would connect them to matter or would gain control of the spirit for them. They are rather given over to something intolerable which is simply their everydayness itself. It is here that the reversal is produced: movement is no longer simply aberrant; aberration is now valid in itself and designates time as its direct cause. 'Time is out of joint': it is off the hinges assigned to it by behaviour in the world, but also by movements of the world. It is no longer time that depends on movement; it is aberrant movement that depends on time....

(Deleuze 1989: 41)

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The film did become our life basically. Tomorrow will be the final day and for those five days, to a large extent, the film was my life. It's like, on Wednesday night my life stopped - my normal life - and on Thursday morning, and for the period of those five days, my life completely changed. And on Tuesday or Monday night it will revert again.

(Arrun Denman, *The Film*)

In *The Film* we are performing filmmaking as we film-make; we are exceeding the actual as we attempt to double it in a mediated representation. In this film everyday we are poets of our own affairs, tracing indeterminate trajectories through a place made virtual, a Bridport both imagined and actual, desired, searched for, but not attained. Our line of flight was deliberately absurd: to chase the pre-filmic with the pro-filmic (a contradiction in terms), directing our camera always towards the pre-filmic, the not possible to see - pointing ourselves towards that which was not useful and finding there any-spaces-whatever and shots that were gestural rather syntactic. This is a film constructed by an unforced gaze, where drifting helped reinstate the speech-act of the moving image in the pro-filmic.

Over the course of the month, the only subject matter I could approach with any conviction was the actuality of making the film, and so I asked whomever I met, and the crew I had assembled from my chance encounters in the town,<sup>1</sup> to enter into a micro-operation with me, what I described as *filming our way to a film (a life)*. A film becomes what Deleuze describes as *a life* (Deleuze 2001) if those who are filmmaking allow the film to be temporarily the process through which they live their life, when together we work towards impossibilities and apply fabrications, when we make of the context, and our selves, an unattainable text. At the end of a day of shooting, precisely because I have been filming all day, near to everything enters my perception as a potential shot. When in production we are in a different experience. The filmmaker is seeing things through the film and in terms of the film: the becoming of time and light, of sequence and duration, of cuts, match-cuts, transitions, expositions, placed over or implicated within social interaction and social space. A person standing in a doorway *becomes*,

not as I see them, but as the film 'sees'. The film as event becomes concurrent with the un-filmed everyday, a difference within it, an aspect of thought as additional prehension; a mode of being prior to the meaning of its object. When a film is a life, it is the looking for the film, or the heading towards the film (which is in front of us) that becomes the determining content of the film itself. If *The Film* is about anything it is about this *space* of thought, of thinking of the film we are making - the interrelation of virtual and actual images in the mind and in film which take place around the event of shooting and editing, the inner speech of the film as it sees and it thinks, as a cluster of vagaries, a non-chronological series of variously motivated utterances. In the process of the shoot, this translated into a play between the pro-filmic and pre-filmic space, and this carried over to the intuitive attitude I would adopt towards the post-production, which in essence was to think a drifting pillow book edit.

Although I met dozens of people during my drift, including the Mayor of Bridport,<sup>2</sup> few were willing or able to engage with the project to a point where we were making the film together. A number of people who took an interest in the process withdrew, or failed to answer any communication, or were overlooked. The lack of intention I had to depict the people of the town or to describe Bridport as a place meant that the project came close to being a series of unpopulated durations in an empty town square, like the final sequence in Antonioni's *L'Eclisse* (1962) where the characters we had grown accustomed to seeing are removed from the frame, and all that is left are the vacant locations we had previously seen them meet in.

The first person who I found myself spending significant time with was a man named Hunky. Hunky and his friend Jim were struck by my vulnerable attempt to find people and make a film. They took me for a drive to show me what they thought of as cinematic locations. I began to shoot video intermittently, and without aim. Hunky is asthmatic and I filmed infrequently, but although shy, Hunky began to share especially personal information with me, somehow inexorably drawn out by the camera. I began to envision a film involving Hunky surrounded by film lights and not saying very much, and perhaps this was already too clear an expectation.

Hunky's asthma worsened and I became concerned for his health. I wondered how I could manage the trust he had shown me, and how I could develop a project that bypassed the information he had given me. Would he expect me to represent him? It was at this point that I realized two things: firstly, that I had found a plentiful subject and secondly, that I had no intention of making the film of this subject. Hunky and I were gradually becoming friends but I was certain that I didn't want the film to be *about* Hunky. The concern I was feeling for his health was directly linked to my shifting attitude to him as a subject. If this form of cinema was a means to live differently, then surely my new life involved an emerging friendship with Hunky. None of his friends seemed concerned, so I took it upon myself to become involved in his well being. In doing so I inadvertently re-cast myself in the role of the persistent reporter, the hounding documentary maker chasing his story - the ethnographer seeking to do good.

An article about the project appeared in the local newspaper, and from this point Hunky stopped returning my calls. Everybody in Bridport reads this paper, and I found people stopping me in the street, asking me how the film was going. This was great publicity for a project that may well have been better off without any. The press legitimizes, makes public what might have benefited from remaining private. On my last visit to Hunky's house I caught sight of him sneaking out through the back stairway. I believe that he and his friends had become suspicious of what they saw to be the point-of-view of a salacious news media. Perhaps they feared I wanted to make a caricatured reality TV programme about them (Hunky's friend Jim later said something to this effect). I was initially afforded the special privileges of a stranger (for a few days I literally felt like a local in the Hope & Anchor pub) but then, with the publishing of the news article, I became regarded as institutional, a legitimized member of the media. Doors that had opened now closed.

After a long chain of associations and chance encounters, I met Roy White and Arrun Denman, both of whom treat hill and coastal walking as a form of meditation, and who for five days willingly allowed their lives to be taken up with very little else but the film.<sup>3</sup> It transpired

that Roy White had something of a reputation in the town as a sage, a flâneur and a former *bon viveur* who preferred to wander the hills and coastline rather than hold down a job or frequent the local pubs. Roy had elements of his own he wanted to bring to the film, including his walking companion Arrun.<sup>4</sup> Both recognized in the open-set attitude of the project sensibilities comparable to their own form of “becoming,” which is landscape walking. In their desire to absent themselves from routine social situations and from habitual or stuck mental activity (what Roy describes in *The Film* as 'role playing' and 'the lumpy gravy'), Roy and Arrun walk daily through repeated landscape sequences, to enable an altered interiority, a practice akin to what De Certeau refers to as 'The long poem of walking' (De Certeau 1985: 98-101<sup>5</sup>). Roy explained at one point that he walks to get away from the enemy, thought.<sup>6</sup> Much of the filmmaking was conducted on or around a walk, but what walking is like for Roy and Arrun is never expressed or described. The *psychogeographical* landscape that we see on the screen resists being a scenic tour. It is not a backdrop to human agency and neither is it a romanticized nor an uninhabited space. Roy and Arrun presented me with two acute presences. Roy could not fail to be charismatic on camera whereas Arrun had a deflective manner and was noticeably awkward on and around the lens, as though partially withdrawn from the situation.<sup>7</sup> I resisted developing ideas based upon Roy's rich character, and also the temptation to draw Arrun's character out. There are no titles in *The Film*, none of the subjects are named using the standard of a strap line at the bottom of a frame, and the three subjects who were unable to participate (Hunky, Jake Dodds and Bernard Gale<sup>8</sup>) appear only as fragments of another possible film. Roy and Arrun are not described in the film in such a way that they could be understood as fully rounded historical subjects. Rather than exploring characters, we instead set off in search of the unknown body in the documentary, which is between an actual thinking body (our bodies), a film body, and the lived world. We turned our minds and our backs on the determining and pervasive strategy of the institution of documentary representation. In its place, we called the film into our minds as we made the film, continually directing ourselves towards film as an enunciation, rather than as an announced, towards the 'I sing' underlying every filmed scene, the here and now of the film in the making. We placed a film (i.e., the cultural product we have in our minds and hope to see on a

screen one day) ahead of us. We saw the film on the horizon and headed towards it, mapping those thoughts onto the actual site of where those film activities were imagined taking place.

1200 feet of 16mm film was shot, and around fifteen hours of digital videotape. The camera was on loan from *PVA*, the local digital media resource, and much of the film we exposed was out of date stock found in a refrigerator in Doug Palmer's camera shop. The film literally emerged from the people, places and apparatus of the town. We walked and filmed our way through the disused Palace cinema and the local ballroom school, across hilltops and along beaches, via allotments and gardens, into the camera shop and out of the town, the moving image our imagined veil directed towards the actual in order that we might inventively alter its emergent and contingent properties. Dolly and track was laid without clear function. At times the 16mm camera was badly loaded, fogging areas of the film. It was unclear when recording had begun and ended. The surplus materials that surfaced and the errors that ensued helped form what might be described as a peculiar kind of structural-materialist documentary, or, more accurately, a game of film orienteering without clues or goals. There was no rationale for shooting *The Film*; there were no rules governing what we recorded because the film had no defined subject, content, or brief, and therefore there was no way of ascertaining what would be useful in terms of compiling a film that would be seen at some point in the future.

The term usefulness is of interest here, particularly in terms of the itinerant and accidental tactical attitude adopted, and how it fundamentally alters what is perceived as valuable and of use by those who are filmmaking. The classical documentary maker, unlike the filmmaker who drifts, must be continually mindful in the present of what she or he needs to record and always receptive to what is necessary for the construction of the intended whole (which is the imagined future of the completed film). The cinema is produced, consumed and measured in terms of what is useful, what is discernible, what is necessary and what is marketable, or as De Certeau writes, on the basis of, 'what is used, not the ways of making' (De Certeau 1984: 35). Although often thousands of feet of film remain unused by the point of the finished film, images



are rarely recorded without purpose or on the basis of not being useful. Seldom are there idle images. As Elisabeth Grosz elaborates,

The useful is always subservient to the requirements of the present: it lacks any element of the untimely. The useful, the utilitarian, the adapted is always that which exploits external circumstance, the given, but which cannot make the given anew, cannot make itself something other. The useful performs only in light of the actual, the real, the present, but it has no aspiration to the untapped, the unknown, the new that attracts and elevates life [...] In other words, the useful can only be understood in terms of the privilege of the present and the known. The useful is what is at hand, available for use now. Nietzsche himself, though, is concerned with a different - deranged - sense of usefulness, the useful in non-determinable contexts, the useful for a future that cannot be predicted, in other words, a useful that is not so much of use but awaiting the invention of a use from its current excess.

(Grosz 2004: 104-105)

Almost all of what a film production shoots is already mentally predetermined as useful.

*Actuality shots* (or, alternatively, *non-shots*, or *B-roll*) are committed to tape or to film in order that they exist as a resource. This resource rescues the editor and the viewer from what is perceived to be the image tedium of a speaking subject during a conventional interview. As viewers, we like to be able to look away. If the subject is talking about walking, then the production researcher makes a note of this and ensures that actuality footage of walking is recorded. This is used as illustrative cut-away material. But, on a less conscious level, every participant in the film production suspends within their minds an image of the film they are making - a mental image that they imagine will later be physically seen - and this image endures as a virtual template transplanted onto the lived world in front of them as they film. This virtual will become a memory, and, moreover, a difference, when thought in relation to the finished film object. To work with an emergent form, and to embrace the arbitrariness of time-images, is to relinquish the hunt for necessary sequences and to produce instead marks and gestures that are given momentum by the mental image of the film (why else are we filmmaking?), but which cannot yet be contained within a sequence as sensible articulation.<sup>9</sup> The film remains in front of us as an image guide track for our behaviour, and we film our way towards it on an errant trajectory of mistake and revision, but the film changes, and so do we. This dialogic attitude between the utterances of the camera, our gestures as filmmakers and the flow of the lived world

around our film cannot be compared with speaking, nor necessarily with the dialectic of the spoken constituting sense as heard. It is the film-act itself, and not the author or the history of actions and authors.



Not useful images? 16mm 'roll-off' and the image complicated by elements (rain drops) on the lens.

Filmmaker Margaret Tait has quoted Lorca's phrase of 'stalking the image' to describe this way of behaving when filming. The process of filmmaking has often been described as not tactile, certainly not when compared with painting, sculpture, even music; the film camera is by comparison regarded as unresponsive to touch. In Tait's films however we find the tremendously sensual scene, and a camera desiring touch, wanting to brush against the lived world, to catch and lose that which it spies through its lens. In *Portrait of Ga* (1955), the camera slips away from its subject (Tait's own mother), it draws around her, finds her in her absence, then sees bull rushes. The film, the filmmaker, the landscape and Ga have indistinct boundaries, always moving, so many bodies trying to give themselves to their exteriority. For Tait (herself trained in a neorealist film school) filmmaking was a means to befriend, a way of spending time, and inventing time, with another. In *Where I Am is Here* (1964) Tait's camera seeks only the incidental, the not consequential, taking on an unusual and intimate compositional force, losing and finding the subject or landscape, never showing or telling but merely glancing past. We see the absent waving away of hands, the shrug, the trip, the inattentive gaze, and movement as ambivalence. Tait's camera utterances are neither determined nor absolute. They bring to the moving image the fluidity Luce Irigaray called for in language: 'Everything, then, should be rethought in terms of

volute(s), helix(es), diagonal(s), spiral(s), curl(s), turn(s), revolution(s), pirouettes(s)' (Irigaray. 1980). Here, the one does not move without the other, the filmmaker does not move without the film, the filmmaker does not move without the lived world and the subject - each are speaking together, pressing their differences together.

Irigaray's polemic emphasizes movement and alterity. In *Speculum of the Other Woman* she adds to her list, with 'Fracturing, bursting, whirling faster and faster, until 'matter shatters and falls into (its) dust' (Irigaray 1974: 64-65<sup>10</sup>). Tait's film poems possess this lyrical giddiness - a fluid and felt nature, disrupting and reversing the flow of time. There is acute and heightened sound; the relationship between word and image has a personal insistence, with Tait's own voice, interrupting, mumbling, announcing. Her attenuated vision is a commentary on the act of looking, the film poems composed of many small and fleeting parts rather than in accordance with a renaissance figure-ground operation. This type of vision seems to challenge the homogeneity of the look that sees all. Again, this is redolent of what Irigaray identified as the women's non-investment in the look. Irigaray writes, 'The possibility that a nothing seen, that a not masterable by the look, by specula(risa)tion, may have some reality would indeed be intolerable to man, since threatening his theory and practice of representation' (Irigaray 1974: 57). Tait's films have a powerful and personal tether to community, so much so that often the films produced were screened in the houses and halls where they were originated, and this was a part of her attempt to develop a language or minor cinema of the people around her. She worked with non-professional performers including family members and friends. It is friendship that emerges as the driving principle for the work - the fact that making films for and about each other is something that friends can do. We can see the same immersion in the ebb and flow of community and friendship in the diary films of Jonas Mekas, and this sensibility is extended by Kenneth Anger and Jack Smith into the everyday as baroque pageant where friends and acquaintances perform the very difference the hand held camera elicits, the intimate spaces of houses and the players dressed into an excessive mise-en-scène. It is this practice, of the diary film as a site for friendship and for the performance of difference, which emerged over the five-day shoot in Dorset.

Without a subject to represent or a story to tell, and without even a pressing aesthetic principle, we are free on our drift to be more tactile with our images in the sense that we are brushing against the lived world, and we are free to be indiscriminate with where we look. When rain began to fall on the hill beside the Look-out during the long take, the camera was left turning over - we see Jess wiping the lens clean, and earlier the faces of the crew obscuring the landscape as they peer inwards, checking the gate. There is the crash of the waves on the shore, a defiant announcement without anything to announce; and there is the acute sound of the crunch of pebbles underfoot, married to a dolly shot which tracks left to right with Roy and Arrun along the beach, simply because it can. On the side of the hill, as the two men approach the camera, we hear the co-mingling of bird song with projector sound, and their images are momentarily spliced to and fro in time. When Roy's voice is picked up on a radio microphone saying to Arrun that the experience feels counterfeit, and that it is impossible for them to get away from the feeling of being in a film, the image looks down, to the forest path, and then cuts, to taped position marks. These are some of the thick descriptions.

Roy commented that it might not be my intention to finish the film, that, 'The film might enter a cul-de-sac. It might not go' (Roy White, *The Film*). Owing to the fact that there was no rationale for shooting, nowhere that we need look, I decided arbitrarily to hand over the final 400 foot film magazine as a *potlatch*, an end of shoot gift to the cast, crew and myself. We were free to pour this film away into the lived world. The 10.5 min. duration of the film magazine was a space for fluidity, a span we could relax in, fill up and wander from. All on site were aware that we were going to roll the camera from the start of the magazine to the end without stopping, and that no directions were likely to be given to those in front of the camera or behind it. This would be my one attempt at structure, a spine for the film, a duration (one filmed magazine is as good a duration as any) upon which to hang the other filmed activity. This effectively meant that the long take 'mattered', at least technically. If we didn't get it, I wasn't sure I would have a means to assemble the material in the edit.

The weather is threatening; dark clouds are looming and the wind is blowing. I have forgotten the film magazine and am forced to drive back to Bridport from the Look-out location. On returning Carlos takes too long to load the camera and by the time we are ready to shoot the rain has set in. A sudden sense of responsibility makes me question whether Arrun and Roy are content to be here. This is the last day and I feel that they have come to do the shot out of commitment to the project rather than enthusiasm for it. I ask myself, have I made a closed set, have I placed a restriction finally, on their lives? The dolly track is laid and the camera turns over. Roy and Arrun walk to the fence at the near side of the field and synchronously check their watches. I have since realized this was their collective reaction: to *time* the ten minutes, presumably so that they could know when it had expired. Roy then defiantly strides away from Arrun and past the camera, navigating his own direction through the duration. He takes possession of the situation, and purposefully crosses over into the pre-filmic space, so that the camera operator is faced with the choice of whether to adjust the frame and find him or not. Arrun is left stranded. The camera tracks away from him and turns 360 degrees, finding Roy as he approaches and enters the Look-out building, and then passing on from him to find Arrun again, literally rotating through ambient space unfettered by human contact and turning to collect him in the frame. Arrun has not moved. His immobility arrives in time (the time of the shot) with surprising impact; he appears like one of the statuesque figures in Resnais' *Last Year at Marienbad*. Arrun has lost his guide, Roy, and, not finding any prompt from behind the camera, is left instead with an on-screen, in-camera time which temporarily causes his paralysis. Once the camera has found Arrun and declared this immobility (immobility off camera is different to immobility on camera), Arrun makes the decision to join Roy in the Look-out. The camera moves with him and we see the dolly track at the bottom of the

frame. Finally, Arrun and Roy emerge from the tiny disused building and walk away from the centrality of the camera position. The absenting of their bodies is not done by exiting frame into the pre-filmic space, to the left or to the right, but rather by departing over duration. The two walk into the centre of the shot, disappearing over distance, as though in an intuitive agreement between filmed and filming, an eloquent reply to the continual gaze of the camera upon them over the period of the five days. The question, "Do you see film as a thought process?" can be heard from off camera. "Hold on a minute Jess" is my reply. Roy and Arrun remain on camera but become absent over space and time. The camera consciousness (my gaze, Carlos' gaze) holds on the landscape as they vanish, and then tracks sideways down the hill, towards anywhere.

What is the speech act of the recording of this pro-filmic space, before it is sanitized by montage? As Joan Copjec notes, film theory has excluded analysis of the pro-filmic, which it regards as the natural (Copjec 1988: 233), in favour of a specific form of film as the statement of *this because of that*. The engineering of suture in film production removes the pro-filmic natural in its surgical assemblage of realism, and film theory has followed suit by concentrating on assemblages rather than durations. The pro-filmic is the raw take prior to having its edges and its temporality buffed into timed and articulated sequences. As we have observed, the very construction of a pro-filmic space (the camera pointed towards something) instantly creates a rich and complex pre-filmic situation, where a different behaviour resides. *The Film*, during its recurring long durational takes, features the camera panning and tracking to 'scoop-up' this pre-filmic, as inscription of time. This scooping-up, this disinterested gaze, like the disengaged camera eye which wanders from the protagonist towards a non-human content in Antonioni's *The Passenger* (1975), speaks to Irigaray's concept of the 'nothing seen.' Deleuze is interested in this disinterested gaze into the pro-filmic space because it conveys the essentially open character of sets. The take, when at its greatest intensity (before it has been foreclosed) is an opening onto time; it is a direct image that shows to us the continuous emergence of the new and unforeseen

(Rodowick 1997: 11<sup>11</sup>). Werner Herzog's *Fata Morgana* (1971) is innovative in this respect, for it presents the seeing of an extraordinary landscape (North Africa) without the point-of-view of the subject who is seeing. James Benning's series *Thirteen Lakes* (2004) also delivers this unfettered secondness as it verges on slipping into firstness: long take after long take of lake surfaces where time does not pass through the schema of the human perceiver in the landscape.<sup>12</sup>

The dolly movement at the end of the 400ft take marks the recognition of what Tarkovsky calls a 'time pressure'<sup>13</sup> in the natural, noting an absence and pulling away, both responding and leading, unfolding without revealing. When the camera moves in this way, new relationships of change are brought into being. There are pivot points, or pointers that may appear to be signaleptic material, such as the dolly tracking movement itself (the sign of a cinematic phrase), but *The Film* does not signify and any pointers steer the audience to a near content-less place. The dolly movement is not linguistic, it is a process of slowing down, an entering into a space of nothing happening, where tension is sustained and the viewer is encouraged to withstand this tension. The frame, then, drifting always towards that which it cannot yet see, is revealed as both container and opening, a way of seeing and not looking caught up in the continual antagonism between the pro-filmic and pre-filmic, always carrying with it the pressure of its impending foreclosure. For Tarkovsky, the frame acts as an intensive threshold through which the force of time, as it exceeds visible representation, allows itself to be felt, and thus the cinematic image affirms the existence of a virtual plane beyond conscious perception.

Roy commented to me on one of our film walks that, 'Ideation is mechanistic, like the camera, working within certain limits. Thoughts should be vast panoramic views' (Roy White. *The Film*). The manner in which Roy and Arrun occupy the 400 ft *plan séquence* (the term in French cinema used to describe a long take) is a lesson in the choices available to any person when asked to improvise. Every moment in our lives involves the activity of thought and of action, and yet when asked to, "Do anything; do nothing" it is not uncommon for the subject on camera to enter into a mild form of mental and physical paralysis, as though the flow of the

everyday has stopped but has not yet been picked up by the new flow of the film image as purpose. The take is a virtual delineation of space and time, an interstice paired with the lived world. The words 'Action!' and 'Cut!' denote an alteration in behavior, as though lived time has temporarily ceased and mediated or performed time has replaced it, except that lived time has not ceased, it remains, concurrent but no longer fore-grounded. The take is a form of picnoleptic absence where the person on-camera is returned to their non-filmic body when the take has ended. A take is like a piece of time placed over time, because when a filmmaker says "Action!" or "Cut!" there exists (has existed) both time-time and film-time. What was taken? A moment of time is not being taken, any more than it is when we are held in a queue or taking an exam, or doing anything that involves the bracketing of time and activity. There is no hole left in the wake of a take because there is *time* time beneath or concurrent with *film* time. In film, a take is made but what film takes it still leaves intact. During a take, the lived world and the mediated slide back and forth in relation to one another as dominate/subordinate, depending upon the situation. In a take, the subject and the object are therefore not divided in a Cartesian subject/object relation but are on the contrary one and the same.<sup>14</sup> The take is both subject and object, 'the stowing away of the body in time' (Bazin 1967: 9), the committing of lived-time to film-time which also involves the behaviour of a film time in the bodies and perceptions of those filmmaking. This is what occurs between the announcement and conclusion of the take. A long take is a corporeal cinematic experimentation, one that can unfold in such a way as to introduce the novel and the unpredictable, and become an example of what Bergson calls 'creative time' at play. It forces the mind and the body to find thought and combat sensation, to wait, to be bored, to be a body craving purpose. Antonioni has remarked that 'When everything has been said, when the main scene seems over, there is what comes afterwards' (Antonioni 1958<sup>15</sup>). Deleuze has said that that one of the defining characteristics of Italian neorealist time-image films is waiting, 'Not the drama of communication but the immense tiredness of the body... and which suggests to thought "something to communicate," the "unthought," life' (Deleuze 1989: 189). This is what George Kouvaros (1998: 251<sup>16</sup>) calls, 'dead time', which is the extra cinematic tension that arises as the take outstays its welcome. He writes that 'during those moments when the director holds a shot



for a few seconds longer than seems necessary [...] we are presented with 'dead time': an expenditure of energy and film stock that in narrative terms contributes little to our understanding of the characters, their motivations or problems. It is at this juncture, when, to borrow a phrase used by Antonioni, "everything already seems to have been said" (Kouvaros 1998: 251). In the aforementioned *Koker trilogy*, Kiarostami reclaims the long take and the multiple take as devices, but opts to point a camera at the camera filming. The pretense of retakes in *Through the Olive Trees* provides a space for the young couple (non-actors performing roles not dissimilar to their selves) to be together in an unusual margin to the restrictive social space of their community. The time between takes provides a clandestine opening for difference, a portion of time placed over time.

I was constantly hunting for scenes in which there was "nothing happening." That nothingness I wanted to include in my film... I needed that "nothing" there... When I use a long shot it distances me from my cast and crew, and that affords them an opportunity to submerge themselves in the environment... After the first one or two minutes of a shot-sequence, that's when the performances get interesting.

(Kiarostami, quoted in Philip Lopate 1996: 38-40<sup>17</sup>)

Entering the weight of time in the long take, and exploring the aspects of what lies before and after it, is precisely the aim of Direct Cinema, but Deleuze criticizes the use of the term 'direct,' outlining how vérité remained bound to the notion of telling, simply using alternate means to arrive at what was considered to be the truth. In fact most expositional and direct documentary have as their objective a pro-filmic truth that resists and denies the one incontrovertible truth: the presence of the team of people filmmaking. The long take is a trope of cinema vérité. This before and after is the excess of any narrative conceit, and the reason both Godard and John Cassavetes often continued to shoot having announced the end of the take to the performers. We can begin to imagine a limitless film take whose duration is an open set.<sup>18</sup>

It seems to me increasingly that the sole great problem of film, in each movie, is where and why to begin a shot and why complete it? Basically, life fills the screen in the way that a faucet is filling a bathtub that is letting out exactly the same amount of water at the same rate.

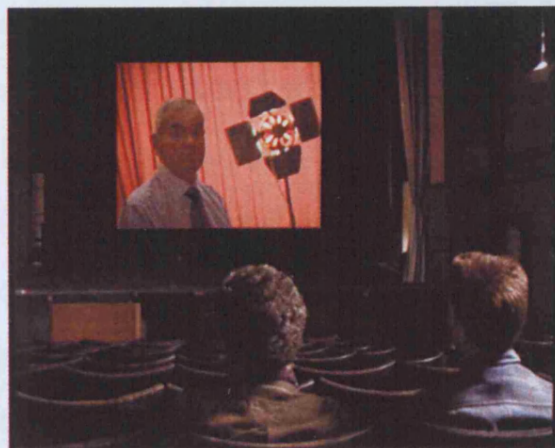
(Jean-Luc Godard, on *Pierrot le Fou* [1965])

There is, in Godard's statement, the sense that film longs to transcend the limitations of virtuality and become physical; that within all filmmaking there is the endeavour to make time into matter and for film to be more physically felt. Any film is inevitably the register of the various ways we try to touch time, and of a loss which is the very indiscernability and running away of time. So, the take is what makes film time and lived time concurrent, pressing together the sheets of time of the present (the filmed) and the future (the film). Not only is the take the recording of an intentionality - what we decided to film - it is also, in some way, the register of the fact that we had a film in mind during the take, a film which was not yet present, for, as Deleuze writes, borrowing from Bergson, 'It is in the present that we make a memory' (Deleuze 1989: 52). Everything that occurs in perception is stored as it occurs, archived as a past as it happens in the present. The crystal image in cinema presents the split where an event is divided in the present of the actual moment, and that present as a virtual which can later be retrieved, as a past.

This is Bergson's third schema, formulated in *Mind-Energy* (Bergson 1920). We are constantly mentally archiving, and these recollection images inform our appreciation of future presents, including the future present of watching the film we are making. We call into our minds the present of a past, where it coincides with our perceptual/cognitive present, maintaining integration and interpenetration through a degree of volume or dissolve.<sup>19</sup> Deleuze gives the semblance of this image mixing in cinema the name *crystal image*, which is the coexistence of past, present and future relations made possible in cinema by the interval and its various transitions and superimpositions. The crystalline regime of the time-image no longer requires an image defined as false, offset with an image defined as true (the past, which is before this present) because truth and falsity, past and present, are now indiscernible and un-decidable.

*The Film* features recollection images that are crystalline in their execution. Sequences are not structured around motivated edits whose intention is the accumulation of meaning, but rather on more direct images of unfolding time and the relationship between space and place, and

between memory and mediation. Both on and off camera conversations with Arrun and Roy were almost entirely based on what they remembered of the film shoot to date. I asked what they thought forthcoming filming should consist of, and what they imagined the finished film would look and sound like. At the time these projections were not prompted in order to elicit specific future edit decisions, although in fact this was how they were applied.<sup>20</sup> Instead they formed part of a general inquiry into the virtual space of film as concurrent to, or mapped onto, lived time (the not-film world). They talked of the likelihood of inclement weather, the time a specific walk might take, what we should try to film, and what we might film again. The vagaries and the fanning out of these thoughts and commentaries guided the film's direction. Their words gave us places to head towards and things to do. When the two men sit together in the Palace Cinema, addressing their thoughts to the (then blank) projection screen in front of them, they are envisioning the film not-yet-finished. I continually asked Roy and Arrun to recollect what had transpired, and to imagine what that would look like as a film, on a screen, rather than orally or mentally described through their own experience. In *The Film*, this event plays out as the present-present of that day of the shoot (The Palace Cinema), from where a past is retrieved and brought into the present (the shooting during the days before) and a future is projected, by calling it into the mind presently (what they imagine the film will be like, as they look at the screen without a film). This is the re-imagining of the historical (the film filmed) as a virtual capable of difference (the film that will be edited).



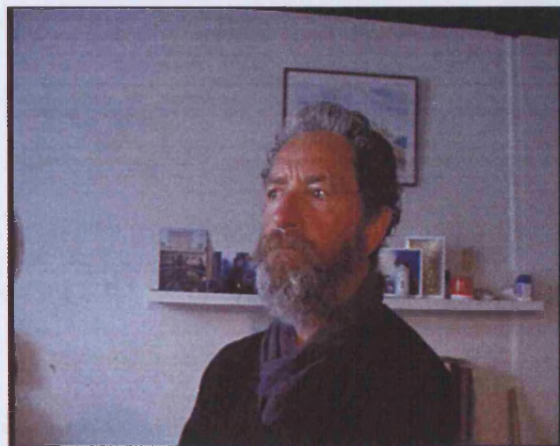
Roy White and Arrun Denman imagining *The Film*.

In the place of exerting a didactic telling of the events, this spoken material prompted rational and non-rational assemblages during the edit, these recollections and mental 'projections' acting as *mnemosigns* (Deleuze 1989: 52) within the final film, co-existing with images of actuality. These conjectures and digressions, the description of the film that will be seen based on what was done, provided a template for the film as the lines of flight of various thoughts and recordings conducted on or around our walks together. Roy and Arrun's on and off-screen voices call up another voice, my voice, which is that of the edit, and together these voices, in dialogic relation, form what Rodowick describes as *the visual and non-linguistic address* of the film itself. Walking and thinking about what we might do gave us direction during the shoot. The fragments of film, videotape and audio recordings of spoken ideas gave me direction during the edit. In the edit suite I responded to visual cues and followed thought trajectories, as they arose, and usually as I first encountered them, when digitizing each tape. There are several tapes that I have to this day not viewed, because I discontinued editing at the point where no lines remained as suggestive to me. *The Film* does not therefore present the specifics of what was seen, imagined or recollected during the shoot, nor try to represent thought, but rather points vaguely towards the very striking but simple fact that we do imagine and recollect, as we currently perceive. Its objective is not to locate perceptions as recollections, but to encounter the limitless complexity of their operation.

It is here that *The Film* seems to offer equivalence to thought, and simultaneously draws attention to how problematic shot-to-shot mental relations are in the documentary mode. In *The Film*, Roy and Arrun are framed by a seriality that makes of them a fabrication. What they appear to see and to remember is not in fact theirs, but the conceit of the film. When Roy glances away from the camera to the earth of his allotment, it is as though his look touches the soil. This relationship from seer to seen is not rational within the lived world, owing to both the tracking movement and macro-frame of the allotment in close-up given to us by the camera. This is an impossible movement that is bound to Roy's distracted gaze through an interval that is itself moving, from rationality to irrationality. The very tactile nature of the arrangement suggests a



form of touch and of thought sensible to the film and not to the subject. Its viewpoint is closer than, other than, our natural vision. This glance is haptic in its dénouement and free and indirect in its arrangement, presenting the detail rather than the wide shot of a vista that we could safely attribute to a point-of-view (before then deciding that the point-of-view did not belong here, in what appears to be a factual sequence). Here, it is the camera that seems to be doing the looking. During another sequence in *The Film*, we see Roy looking through his monocular, and this shot is followed by a free and indirect shot of an elderly woman on a beach with her dog. There is enough of a rational relationship between the shot of the 'seer' and the shot of the 'seen' for the viewer to accept the image as the looking of the subject, that is, until registration numbers appear on the film strip and the 'seen' cuts to an entirely arbitrary shot of a different seafront.



Roy White recollecting in *The Film*.

A subject waiting for activity to take place can demonstrate momentary lapses of attentiveness, where thought takes greater command of the disposition of the body. Towards the end of *The Film*, Roy is asked whether he had ever thought of the other people who had previously been involved in the film, and if he had any concern for, or interest in these subjects, who had for whatever reason fallen by the wayside. In this section, we see the image of Roy thinking, and this is the image of a factual moment (he is remembering). Roy looks up and then away to the left of the frame, out of shot. The sequence cuts to the (repeated) image of Bernard Gale, stepping up to his mark in the ballroom school, and then it returns to Roy, who remarks that

certain people had been 'Cast out [...] pushed aside.' When the image of Roy's face appears to us to be remembering (or imagining), and this appearance of thought is followed by a repeated image from earlier in the film, the sequence takes on the stance of a recollection, contravening one of the rules that binds the documentary to sobriety: we are seeing an historical subject's memory. We have what appears to be a shot-to-shot relation giving us information about what Roy knows of Bernard, and yet during the period of filming Roy and Bernard never met, and did not discuss the project. This relation of thought is my relation, prompted by the vagaries of Roy's on-screen distraction. Bernard Gale appears only as a fragment of another possible film, a visual cue - one whose manifestation is loose, conjectural. Lost or 'discarded' subjects (as Roy phrases it), are frequently conjured back into the film by Roy and Arrun's apparent on-screen recollection or imagination. Arrun points downhill to the café and recounts the experience that took place some minutes previously at that location. Roy points to an area of white sky and this match cuts to a projected white film frame, or appears to have a daydream of the Look-Out when he is watching the old movie in Doug Palmer's camera shop. In *The Film*, we are not being shown the facsimile of memory (the twenty-eight minute edit does not have the objective of giving equivalence to the co-existence of recollection images and attentive recognition in the mind) but rather the fact that we do remember images in our lives, and that we also remember cinema images.<sup>21</sup> The visual field is never bound with any stability to Roy or to Arrun's thinking, nor to their point of view; it is the beginning point of a projection, a memory that is mobile and without a thinker. These thoughts are in departure from Roy and Arrun as thinking subjects, so that gradually the film is thinking, by itself.<sup>22</sup> It is in this way that the cinema enables a counter-linguistic enunciation of thought.

Deleuze is particularly fantastical on this matter. He writes, 'The virtual image (pure recollection) is not a psychological state or a consciousness: it exists outside of consciousness, in time, and we should have no more difficulty in admitting the virtual existence of pure recollections in time than we do for the actual existence of non-perceived objects in space' (Deleuze 1989: 80). The past, present, and future are brought together as concurrent in Resnais'

*Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959), the film itself a peculiar time capsule rendering personal history as a singularity in thought. Not, 'Did it ever rain?' but 'Does it ever rain?' Which is the case, Hiroshima as a subset of the girl who is remembering, or the girl as a subset of Hiroshima as an event in time? It is not possible to say. The very taking place of an event depends on a forgetting that makes way for a remembering. This is the radical alterity of forgetting and what occludes the screaming noise of immanence.

Tarkovsky's images, for example in *Mirror* (1974), appear to think themselves in this way, without the summary or conclusion of an established thinking operation. In *Mirror*, it is neither necessary nor possible to locate the bodies on-screen as consistent historical identities that are thinking or remembering. The film instead provides a zone for sensing in the moving image the pressure of time and memory as it seems to manifest on that very image. It is not possible to re-trace a teleology based on causal events in *Mirror*. The images are the heaviness of time and the flimsiness of space, stream flows, bursts of growth and then lapses of stagnancy. The film is a damp mist. Images curl around one another even as they temporally precede and follow in a line, like the child's early brain, which does not (yet) remember the day (today) as a sequence. The neural connections are not orderly, motivated or prioritized. This is a de-differentiated world, where the edit is a response to the time-thrusts or temporal pressures that visibly emerge in the take.<sup>23</sup> There is the co-mingling of archive footage, dramatic scenes and lush flights of cine consciousness. Interiority of thought (memory, point-of-view, and the imagined) transgresses the virtuality of its being, so that what is established as document is then re-qualified as invention, only to crop up again as actuality. The director is unconcerned with the hierarchies and authorities of these differing images, for him they have no difference because each has a rhythm that echoes the essential movement of matter. Margarita Terekhova is an intercessor. She is actress, grandmother, mother, daughter and wife, across time, both historical and ahistorical. *Mirror* thinks and remembers in the way that the cinema can and the human subject cannot. It presents memories in the form of open sets, something our own minds struggle to do. It is not possible to locate the filmed present tense, which images of the characters is imagined, which

remembered, which existing later, because the convention of the flashback as an image or a filmic segment which represents temporal occurrences from before the image previous to the one we are now watching does not apply. Neither is it possible to ascribe status to any image as being fictional, factual, recollected, dreamt, or envisioned. The present endlessly returns, although we cannot hold onto it with any teleological certainty.

Material from the past becomes a new material for the present. We often remember *where* the place of a memory occurred before we remember the specifics of the events of that memory, and, more curiously, we frequently remember the place where we previously had a recollection. As de Certeau writes 'Memory is played like circumstances, just as a piano is played by a musician and music emerges from it when its keys are touched by hands' (De Certeau 1984: 87<sup>24</sup>). Location, then, and landscape, provides pause and projection space for new thought and recollection. The remembering of remembering reveals the cartographic practice of the mind, how it produces within itself virtual spaces as points of origin - the virtual bodies of a life. This is why so much has been written about the relationship between the moving image in its assemblage and the co-existence of present perception, recollection, and the imagined, in the process of thought. The very timeliness of cinema is that it is always binding a subject to the moment of their depiction; even when a film is a fiction being made, it is always at the same time a document of the moment of that fiction's construction, a time machine. Philosophy is untimely, as Rodowick puts it, always too early or too late. Yet cinema gives to philosophy the power of untimeliness seen in crystalline form. This is why Rodowick names the cinema 'Gilles Deleuze's time machine.'

It is difficult to isolate my editing process for *The Film*. The edit is always a conflict between idea and schema. In any edit there is the rush of emergence in terms of the possibilities of the arrangement of the filmed material into an edit, which is near limitless, but this emergence is continually impeded by the template of the timeline and, to recapitulate, every editor edits at the top of the ever-growing pyramid of previously edited films. The crystalline image deviations



within *The Film*, which are so uncommon to the documentary, are not edited automatically or arbitrarily but are based on the perceptual digressions and distractions observed when viewing the video and film rushes, where on-camera subjects glanced away, turned their heads, pointed or moved their bodies. This is where *The Film* differs from *Mirror*, *Sans Soleil* and the *film poems* of Margaret Tait. The process is more manifestly a result of the properties and the situation of the shoot, and of the mental and physical suggestion of those who are on-camera. Its assemblage is similarly crystalline, interlacing actual and invented material, but there is a greater realization of free-association. Ours was an actual drift and our filmmaking transformed that actual. All of our attention was given over to the same virtual: the film in front of us that we were filming our way towards.

In *The Film*, the edit takes us back to the other film, which is the search for the film, the film on the way to the film. The nature of how *The Film* was arranged became a topic of considerable debate at the first test screening. It was suggested that the open set of the production had become a closed set in the over-determined and composed sequences of its completion, and that the collaboration had collapsed into the articulation of a single author, because I had completed the film by myself.<sup>25</sup> In fact, the version I had screened was a rough-cut based on provisional assemblages, where I had tried out arrangements in the edit timeline based on ideas that came to me with the viewing of each tape. The version I screened has not been modified since. It is as though the public event of the screening acted as fixing of *The Film*, like the firing of a clay pot in a kiln. At the screening, Roy argued that the edit was in fact my conversational reply (albeit in an irrational vernacular) to his on-screen musings and observations. My understanding of this comment is that Roy had taken on co-ownership of the project, and that, in his estimation, he and Arrun had shown me physical spaces (movements through landscapes) and in return I had show them virtual spaces, (movements in time). I had in fact invited Roy and Arrun to be a part of the editing process, but they did not like the idea of spending that much time with a computer in a small room, and politely declined. It is my subjectivity and the immediacy of my own thinking that is given space in the edit. I am free to make time utterances, spatial

expressions, and to produce both rational and non-rational assemblage from the material garnered on the shoot. This is a space of creativity granted to me by those whom I made the film with, but it is also a space of dialogic relations, because my own edit announcements are for the most part intuitive replies to the utterances of the camera and the people on camera.

I did bring a concept to the production of *The Film*, together with a filmmaking history and ability, but during the shoot (with the exception, perhaps, of the final 400ft take) I refused to situate *The Film* anywhere else than where it was and where it was going, which was always in the direction of another film, the film we invented as we went along. *The Film* attempted to use the dynamics of proliferation of a system, in this case a film-in-production system. As a finite, resolved, cultural object, *The Film* is not strictly speaking complete, or closed. It is a rough draft, the potential of which is not necessarily fulfilled in the traditional sense of a viable film object. The credits, such as they are, are spoken by Roy White over a black screen, as an imageless signature of the bodies, intentions, and places the film traverses. There are no content curves, no introductions or conclusions, no stories, only events marked by edit and framing decisions, what Tarkovsky describes as *pointers to life*.

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<sup>1</sup> Carlos Guarita, a photojournalist, Jess Wiley, a media arts student, and Doug Palmer, the owner of the photographic shop in town.

<sup>2</sup> Their names are: Linda, Mutter, Cressida, Hunky, Jim, Nikki, Martin and Jules, Humphrey, The Town Clerk, Ian, Peter, Margery, Andy Head, Joan in the Square, Rachel, John.

<sup>3</sup> Roy White was ushered into my makeshift studio one evening by Carlos Guarita, a stills photographer and militant direct cineaste I had come to know in the town, who was well aware of my predicament of "missing people." Carlos and I had agreed to work together on the film, with him loading and shooting 16mm.

<sup>4</sup> A number of details concerning Arrun's personal history inevitably came to light over the course of filming, although they are not commented on in *The Film*.

<sup>5</sup> De Certeau writes that walking is an act of enunciation that 'detours and tours as turns of phrase [...] combines styles and phrases like ordinary language' (De Certeau 1984: 98-101)

<sup>6</sup> Roy remarks 'I don't lay much store by the cranial brain. We're trying to get beyond ideation and the fiction house - the conditioned and the known, to a shared walkabout on film' (Roy White, *The Film*).

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<sup>7</sup> Arrun was not comfortable on camera but I believe that he allowed the filming to happen from something like a Buddhist perspective - the film had come his way and why would he block it? He made this decision after much deliberation, and after an almost interrogative debate with me, in which I was made to feel psychologically unpacked and examined by the two men. This process had taken me into open territory and without brief. I became profoundly aware of the instability of asking strangers to make a journey with me with film, although this now reads like a rounded off narrative, which of course it was not. That is what tries to push through when one uses story as the format for the description of events.

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<sup>8</sup> The late Bernard Gale was the founder and instructor at the local ballroom dancing academy, a rare and antiquated building that was once the local Fleapit cinema. Jake Dodds, now a skilled fish chef in a local restaurant, was a hedonist on the Covent Garden transgressive fashion scene in the 1980s. Bernard and Jake were perfect subjects, but I was not looking for subjects, and at any rate neither of them could give over sufficient time to live a film with me.

<sup>9</sup> What is it that constitutes a useful documentary image? Is it one that is indexical and therefore true, or one that remains indexical to an event even though the meaning of that event has been changed by rhetorical manipulation?<sup>9</sup> What constitutes a useful fiction image? Is it one that is symbolically meaningful and therefore true for the story that purports to form the whole of its diegetic reality?

<sup>10</sup> Luce Irigaray, *Speculum of the Other Woman*. 1974: 64-65.

<sup>11</sup> Rodowick writes that 'Framing detaches objects from the pro-filmic space, grouping actions, gestures, bodies and decors in a motivated ensemble [...] The continuity system of editing established one set of norms for the linkage of shots through rational divisions. But an enlarged conception of off-screen space is equally important for Deleuze because it expresses the essentially open character of sets' (Rodowick 1997: 11). Tarkovsky explains that editing cannot be the dominant structural element of a film, as the protagonists of Soviet montage cinema (Kuleshov and Eisenstein) maintained in the 1920s. The film image comes into being during shooting, and exists within the frame. As Donato Totaro explains, editing brings together shots that are already filled with time (Totaro 1992: 24). The function of editing is to organize the time-images into a wave structure inherent to film, that is, the time-pressure wave. Tarkovsky's concept of time-pressure is like a meteorological time-front that propagates from shot-to-shot and throughout the film, or a cardiopulmonary time-pulse that thrust against the arterial walls of the scenes, bringing temporal oxygenation to the shots and overall meaning to the film-form. (Source: *Film Theory Meets Physics. A Deleuzian Analysis of Tarkovsky's Theory of Time-Pressure, Part 1: Tarkovsky's theory of time-pressure as 'cinematics'*. David George Menard. [http://www.horschamp.qc.ca/index\\_offscreen\\_essays.html](http://www.horschamp.qc.ca/index_offscreen_essays.html) [uploaded August 2003]). David Rodowick also writes of time's relation, or force in the image – that which prevents each set (shot), however big it is, from closing in on itself; that which forces it to extend itself to a larger set (Rodowick, 1997).

<sup>12</sup> In Bergson's theory of creative evolution such a disengaged vision (the seeing of the artist) is an intention towards the lived world, where mimetic striving is replaced by distracted looking, although in Sobchack's view, this mimetic

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striving has always been in fact to make a representation of the striving to represent: 'While the 'age-old striving' of the visual arts has always been a mimetic striving, it is bent less on imitating the nature of intentional objects than on imitating the function of human intentional subjects who engage those objects as significant' (Sobchack 1992: 249).

<sup>13</sup> See, Andrei Tarkovsky (1989) *Sculpting in Time: Reflections on the Cinema*.

<sup>14</sup> See also Rodowick 1997: 85.

<sup>15</sup> Antonioni, quoted in the interview *Colloquio con Michaelangelo Antonioni* for *Blanco e Nero*, June 1958. Deleuze has said that one of the defining characteristics of Italian neorealist time-image films is waiting. Not the drama of communication but the immense tiredness of the body [...] and which suggests to thought 'something to communicate', the 'unthought', life. (Deleuze 1989: 189). In regard to Antonioni in particular, he writes that, 'the idle periods in Antonioni do not merely show the banalities of daily life, they reap the consequences or the effect of a remarkable event which is reported only through itself without being explained [...] The method of report in Antonioni always has this function of bringing idle periods and empty spaces together' (Deleuze 1989: 7).

<sup>16</sup> Kouvaros, *Where Does it Happen? The Place of Performance in the Work of John Cassavetes* Screen 39: 3. Autumn 1998.

<sup>17</sup> Abbas Kiarostami, interviewed by Philip Lopate, *Film Comment*, July-August 1996: 40.

<sup>18</sup> Jean Eustache's *Numéro Zéro* (1971) is based on such an idea. The filmmaker records his blind eighty-year-old Grandmother, her testimony providing two hours of unedited recollection, a feat achieved through two cameras whose magazines were staggered.<sup>18</sup> There are ten magazines to each camera, and the clapperboard intervenes in the shot midway through each magazine to mark the beginning of its counterpart. Cigarettes are lit and expire, day becomes night, and as Rodowick observes, immeasurable qualitative time accumulates (Rodowick, in conversation with the author, Harvard University May 2005).

<sup>19</sup> In *Incisions in History/Segments of Eternity* (in *Circles of Confusion*, 1983) Hollis Frampton provides a metaphorical picture: memory and its mirror image, conjecture, are a foggy foreground and background, folded over the plane of focus that is the present.

<sup>20</sup> It was, however, difficult to explain to Roy and Arrun exactly what I meant by this process. The supremacy of narrative within a common association of cinema meant that the two of them assumed I wanted them to tell me the story of our days together, to provide a history. I sought something altogether less teleologically resolved. My intention was that the conjectures and digressions, the details and inaccuracies of their testimony would provide some sort of text template for the film – a tapestry of thought and unthought, of remembered and altered (dramatized).

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<sup>21</sup> This is the meaning of Heidegger's statement that, in the twentieth century 'The world worlds cinematographically.'

We remember cinema, newsreel, broadcast television, and so on. A clear example of this is again the Super8mm *Zapruder* footage of the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Regardless of whether we were in Dallas, Texas or on the

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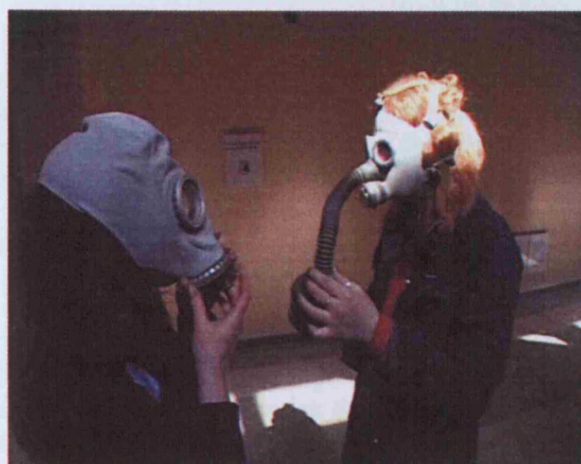
other side of the world at that time, whether we were alive or not yet born, our mental image of that historical event - our memory of it - is that sequence of Super8mm film.

<sup>22</sup> Arrun remarked to me that 'Thoughts don't think. There isn't experience and experiencer; there is just experience.'

<sup>23</sup> See, Andrei Tarkovsky (1989) *Sculpting in Time*.

<sup>24</sup> de Certeau adds that, in memory, 'details are never what they are: they are not objects for they are allusive as such; not fragments, for they yield the ensemble they forget; not totalities since they are not self-sufficient; not stable since each recall alters them' (De Certeau 1984: 88).

<sup>25</sup> The convention of the documentary is that the final cut remains with the filmmaker and not the subject.



...the fantastic world of equivocality, multi-signification, metaphor, simile, similitude, parable, and allegory are all legitimated and thus linked to the world of 'reality' as we phenomenally experience it. This expansion of the 'real' to include the phantasmagor impregnates the very act of narrative with a manipulative power over all its claims to 'Truth-Telling' [...] Thus amorphosized, the realm of reality becomes always already pregnant with modes...

(Hamid Dabashi 1999: 262)

The cinema author finds himself before a people which, from the point of view of culture, is doubly colonized, colonized by stories that have come from elsewhere, but also by their own myths become impersonal entities at the service of the colonizer. The author must not, then, make himself into the ethnologist of his people nor himself invent a fiction which would be one more private story: for every personal fiction, like every impersonal myth, is on the side of the 'masters'.

(Deleuze 1989: 222)

Rather than filmmaker being observer, there are two subjects transformed – filmmaker and situation. Each is in a transformative relationship with the other.

(D.N. Rodowick<sup>1</sup>)

What we are heading towards is a concept for filmmaking as the eventful site for becoming other than we are. Such an intervention into reality by the cinema is a means to make inventive use of this world now, using film ideas, film takes, filmed reenactments, the powers of the fictive through the context of filmmaking, and uncommon film assemblages. What can we make of the lived world if we take on the role of filmmaker, and who do we become when we film? Let us for a moment think of the act of filmmaking as something that temporarily clothes the real with fabulation.<sup>2</sup> We can then regard filmmaking as a ritual, a latter-day form of ‘quilting’ where a number of people come together to stitch time, and where the frame of a film in the making produces new behaviour from a situation where difference is licensed and where social histories have the opportunity for temporary suspension.

As we have seen, there are preexisting frames for conceiving of the subsets *cinema*, *film* and *filmmaking*. The frame of film production is arguably the most mobile of these and can be constantly shifting and blurring, its boundaries determined by the specific learned understanding of what a cinematic transaction is by the various participants. And within the film crew there are also differing levels of involvement in both the imagined and the produced film. For example, a director of photography will not commonly have read the script, choosing instead to approach the production in terms of the *mise-en-scène* (usually a lighting set-up or specific camera movement, followed by another set-up) without needing or wanting to conceive of the film as a whole. The director of photography, the sound recordist and all of the other members of the crew and the cast will thus each have different mental images of events during any given filmed take, and their mental images will be different in turn to the natural perception of those around the set who have no prior knowledge of the project or of the process of film production. The film set tolerates



elastic levels of performativity because it requires that the crew and cast suspend large amounts of their identity and personal history so as to focus on the virtual film to come. The range and fluctuation of social frames during filmmaking is unprecedented in the arts. The film actor is other than themselves whilst also their self (this is the take as both subject *and* object), and the director and other crewmembers are afforded extraordinary (albeit temporary) powers for effecting change in space and behaviour. This may also be the case on the theatre stage, but the film set is *not* the space of its exhibition - it is the lived world at the same time that it is the lived world as difference. Filmmaking directly uses the material of the lived world it seeks to portray. The staged play, like other art forms such as painting, music and literature, has no danger of being mistaken for the lived world, and this is what makes the media of film or video, cinema or television, unique in terms of its chameleon properties. The agency of the video or film camera, and the powers of thought produced by the film-to-be-made, gives permission for otherwise socially unusual and even unacceptable behaviour. The medium is also particularly well suited to deception, always providing a provisional stage for alterity. For example, in a documentary, a person may be asked to repeat an actual action for the sake of a shot that has impact in terms of the film's narrative or argument. Whenever we see a telephone answered during a documentary it is highly unlikely that the camera crew waited around with their lens trained on the receiver in the hope that it might ring. There is certainly an appropriate manner and style of delivery in a documentary. Subjects do not usually have their backs to the cameras, and as viewers we are not often privy to parts of a testimony that were hesitant or incoherent.

We can look upon the levels of participation a documentary or fiction film production offers, for both the crew and the performers or subjects, as comparable to Irving Goffman's example of the social construction and multiple frames of the sporting event, where the players are differently engaged in the spectacle than the supporters watching.<sup>3</sup> Goffman also gives the example of the rehearsal as a space of complex and overlapping social frames.<sup>4</sup> In every social situation we encounter or self-produce sets of frames which determine our conduct within them. The frame of cinema, and within it the frame of its operation, filmmaking (the shoot) constitutes a

particularly expansive means to perform as another, and, specifically by directing, to alter the patterns of particular aspects of the social world.



*Close-Up* (Abbas Kiarostami 1990)

*Close-Up* (Abbas Kiarostami 1990) has as its central principle the social frame of the cinema, and film directing as a life-altering (pre)-occupation. Hossein Sabzian is a working class father and divorcee who is frequently mistaken for the famous Iranian director Mohsen Makhmalbaf, whose films he reveres. On a bus in Tehran a woman (Mahrokh Ahankhah) notices sabzian reading the novel of Makhmalbaf's *The Cyclist*. She remarks to him how much her family enjoyed the film, and Sabzian spontaneously replies that he is in fact Makhmalbaf. Pretending to be Makhmalbaf, Sabzian befriends Mrs Ahankhah's family and makes several visits to their wealthy home under the pretext that he wishes to make a film about their lives, the script for which he has titled *The House of the Spider*. He particularly impresses and befriends the family's two sons and, in keeping with the contemporary practice of Iranian filmmakers, intends for the family to play themselves in his film. Rehearsals begin, shots are planned and the director begins to spend the night at the house. Soon the family becomes suspicious, finally inviting their journalist friend Farazmand to visit on one of the rehearsal days in order to identify whether the man is in fact Makhmalbaf. Kiarostami's interest in Farazmand's subsequent article, *Bogus Makhmalbaf Arrested*, prompts him to visit Sabzian in prison, where he is being detained awaiting a court hearing on the charge of fraud. During their extraordinary meeting, Sabzian makes an unusual appeal. When asked what the director might do to help him in his predicament, Sabzian answers 'Can you make a film about my suffering?'

Sometimes you can realize that the frame created for one individual maybe is just too tight and you have to extend it. And this is what Sabzian was trying to prove: that he needed a larger, an extended, frame.

(Abbas Kiarostami<sup>5</sup>)

The larger frame that Sabzian found for himself is the persona of a film director. Sabzian's form of identity shifting is what proponents of social construction theory, including Goffman, regard as essentially human. Social construction theory puts forward a post-structural understanding of the self as a mechanism for creative adaptation, in which identity appropriates and re-authors what it encounters in the other, the self now 'an impersonator,' as Barbara Socor phrases it, 'a role in eternal re-write' (Socor 2000<sup>6</sup>). Theories of social construction repeatedly espouse the terms 'stage' and 'frame.' Berger and Luckman write that 'The (siren) call(s) of the (many) other(s) bid one "try out" some of the countless roles, and don some of the sundry guises that are so accessible as alternative "lifestyles"' (Berger & Luckman 1966<sup>7</sup>). In *The Saturated Self*, Kenneth Gergen describes a society in which all manner of roles are available for the trying, where every stranger, or other, is a persona that can be acquired. He quotes Goffman, 'The self... is not an organic thing that has a specific location... it is a dramatic effect arising from the scene that is presented' (Goffman 1959: 253 quoted in Gergen 1991<sup>8</sup>). Goffman examines the methods people have for positioning themselves and declaring their active nature to others - how people maintain an impression of themselves as social acceptable or not - and likens this activity to a staged play where representations form influence over other participants, and routines of behaviour are observed. This conception of contractual frames within social exchange is a sociological concept that relates to the individual's way of experiencing the current situation, regulating his or her own conduct and interpreting the behaviour of others. Goffman identifies how a frame can be a modality to one participant whilst a forgery to another, for example when a sporting contest becomes for one active member a fight, or when a charming visitor to one's door becomes revealed as a sales person. In modalisations, all those who participate share the same point of view, whereas forgery depends on differences in points of view. These social frames shift in their orders and we, in turn, shift in our attitude towards them. In the context of our inquiry, we

can think of the frame of filmmaking as simultaneously forgery and modality, in that different members of the ensemble have differing understandings of what is taking place.

Sabzian's actions constitute forgery but they are also eloquent extensions and interpretations of what Michel Foucault calls, 'our participation in the present system.'<sup>9</sup> Sabzian's uprising is temporary. His rental of space and nomadic use of his own self-image is inevitably contained. For a brief period of time, Sabzian had successfully modified his world, reversing its terms so that he was no longer a slave but a master. In response to this, and also for a limited period of time, Kiarostami makes a modification to Sabzian's world. Following his meeting with Sabzian in the prison, Kiarostami proceeds to appropriate actual events into a new narrative of the depiction of these events, casting Sabzian and the Ahankhah family as themselves in a series of filmed reenactments. The experimental frame of Sabzian's mode of cine carnival is re-composed, sanitized (or aestheticised, even) by Kiarostami, into the frame of cinema as psychodrama. In effect, he constructs a fence around Sabzian's cinema as carnival in order that it become something which Kiarostami can show to the world. Kiarostami's feat is that, in making *Close-Up*, he enables both Sabzian and the Ahankhah family to finally realize their mutual desire to participate in the production of a film, each of them now re-performing for the camera the situation they had previously lived through. As Alberto Elena writes, 'Like a real god, Kiarostami creates reality and makes Sabzian's dream come true' (Elena 2005: 45). Kiarostami finds an opening and makes with his film a space for ruminating on how cinema (specifically, the documentary) and the social lived world are constructed and maintained, and also examining what license the cinema gives us to transform the lived world.<sup>10</sup> The conundrum offered to the viewer of whether to regard the film as factual or fictional throws the very notion of film realism - whether documentary or fiction - into question.

Kiarostami is, however, contradictory when he makes observations about his own filmmaking ideology in regard to Sabzian's behaviour. He paraphrases Oscar Wilde when in relation to *Close-Up* he remarks that 'We can never get close to the truth except by lying,'

(Kiarostami<sup>11</sup>) and yet he qualifies Sabzian's actions as being psychologically unsound, stating that 'Ultimately, what the film is dealing with is the difference between the "ideal self" and the "real self;" the greater the difference, the more unbalanced the person' (Kiarostami, *ibid*<sup>12</sup>). Perhaps the esteemed filmmaker draws a distinction between the conduct of actual directors and chameleon ones. As Jonathan Rosenbaum writes, 'Kiarostami gets prizes and recognition for persuading Sabzian, The Ahankhahs, the reporter, the judge, and others to impersonate themselves' (Rosenbaum 2003).

Kiarostami seems to advocate a more indirect form of political cinema, a first-person cinema where "the people are missing," but instead the filmmaker, in just one person, is 'a genuine collective agent, a collective fermenting agent, a catalyst'

(Elena 2005: 193)

But is Kiarostami's concept not in fact Sabzian's concept, and therefore might we ultimately think of *Close-Up* as a collaboration? Certainly, Kiarostami has been known to play all manner of games with his performers. During the shooting of *Taste of Cherry* (1997), for example, the director stood in for all of the off-camera parts during the shot/reverse-shot sequences filmed in the main character's car, which meant that almost none of the performers met one another. Kiarostami is infamous for never removing his sunglasses (on and off set), thus hyper-controlling the frame of his own social situation, reinforcing the stereotype of the film director as dictator whilst occupying the free play and license afforded to him as the arbiter of events. In *Life and Nothing More* and in *Ten on Ten* (2004), Kiarostami parodies himself as he perpetuates this attitude. The role of film director is the persona Kiarostami has acquired in order to become a speaking subject to his self. Like Nick Broomfield, he performs 'Abbas Kiarostami' as his own difference. Assuming the position of the film director as speaking subject in this way is necessitated by incontrovertible social distinctions and power relations between *director-as-subject*, and the object of the director's address, *the subject-as-object*, thus demarcating and reinforcing conceptual and cultural boundaries. This persona, of the *film director*, can be highly manipulative (there are accounts of Sam Peckinpah and William Friedkin persecuting their cast, and Werner Herzog once famously pulled a gun on Klaus Kinski, threatening to shoot Kinski and then himself if the actor left the set of *Fitzcarraldo* [1982]), but the persona can also afford

intensely positive changes in attitude towards the lived world. In fact, in *Close-Up*, Kiarostami the author, and Sabzian the subject, have assumed the same role. Sabzian has performed a mimesis of 'film director', producing himself as an other, just as Kiarostami is already performing the role of Kiarostami.<sup>13</sup>

Beyond the true or the false, becoming of power of the false...Sometimes it is a character himself crossing a limit and becoming another, in an act of story telling which connects him to a people past or to come...and there is a double becoming superimposed for the author becomes another as much as his character does (as with Perrault who takes the character as 'intercessor' or with Rouch who tends to become a black in a quite different non-symmetrical way).

(Deleuze 1989: 275)

At one point the real director, Mr. Makhmalbaf, came to visit the family, to impress them in Sabzian's behalf, and the mother said to Makhmalbaf when he was leaving the house: "Mr. Makhmalbaf, the other Mr. Makhmalbaf was more Makhmalbaf than you are." (Laughter.) I think the reason is that Sabzian wanted so desperately to be Makhmalbaf, but the real Makhmalbaf doesn't care to be Makhmalbaf any more.

(Kiarostami<sup>14</sup>)

The understanding that a film would be produced created a consensus between Sabzian and the Ahankhah family that would later manifest as a conflict. It is the conflict caused by Sabzian's ruse that ultimately constitutes the film *Close-Up*. Sabzian's forgery of Makhmalbaf enabled him to exert influence over the lives of a circle of people in a social environment otherwise closed off to him. His overthrowing of social hierarchies was temporary, the participatory frame of cinema that he constructed collapsing at the point in which he was found out. The model of Iranian cinema he so admired and chose to emulate thus operates within an anomalous attitude towards class. It's social attitude negates the cult of celebrity, allows for non-performers to play themselves in the place of actors and has as its objective the presentation of real-life through the collaboration with real-lives. Yet the practice of cinema in Iran, albeit a medium of popular culture, inevitably elevates its makers to a higher ranking in society, enabling Sabzian, as Makhmalbaf, to associate with another class. As Mehrnaz Saeed-Vafa writes '*Close-Up* shows how cinema, the most popular form of entertainment in Iran, has become perceived as a means to access power overnight (like basketball for American blacks) - a kind of work that

requires no education and just a little luck' (Saeed-Vafa & Rosenbaum 2003: 48<sup>15</sup>). Not one person in *Close-Up* seems satisfied with who they are socially: Sabzian, Mr. Ahankhah, his son, the journalist who exposes Sabzian, the taxi driver who delivers the journalist, even Makhmalbaf and Kiarostami.

In a continually changing reality, adaptation to change can find its greatest flow in the performance of difference we can observe in Sabzian's extraordinary subterfuge. However, this flow is impeded by oedipal attitudes to identity that, according to Deleuze and Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus* (1986), herald merely the return of the same - the sameness of self that we perform to others on the understanding that sameness of self is returned to us. This is the contract of habituation. In *Anti-Oedipus* Deleuze and Guattari suggest that the Freudian self be replaced by a life. *A Life* (every life) consists of indefinite spatial and temporal distribution and continually passes through any-spaces-whatever and any-times-whatever, until its difference expires. 'Do not ask who I am and do not ask me to remain the same' declares Foucault (1976: 17<sup>16</sup>). 'Identity is nothing more than a series of repetitive acts' Judith Butler writes in *Gender Trouble* (1990). 'I get the impression he is still acting, playing for our sympathy' remarks the eldest son in the Ahankhah family, Merhdad, during the court hearing in *Close-Up*. And Sabzian himself says (*To Mr. Ahankhah*) 'Do you find me unnatural?' *We see Sabzian's face in mid-shot. His face registers both conviction and deceit. He is thinking. He is weighing up the necessary honesty and humility required for the scene.* When we see him released, having been pardoned by the Ahankhah family, Sabzian has a different character. As he is delivered on the back of a scooter by his idol, Makhmalbaf, to the family home the implication is that Sabzian must be rehabilitated, must find his former position on the stage of Tehran and return to a more sanctioned social role, the one of sick man, of impoverished man, who has descended into being once again the character of himself.

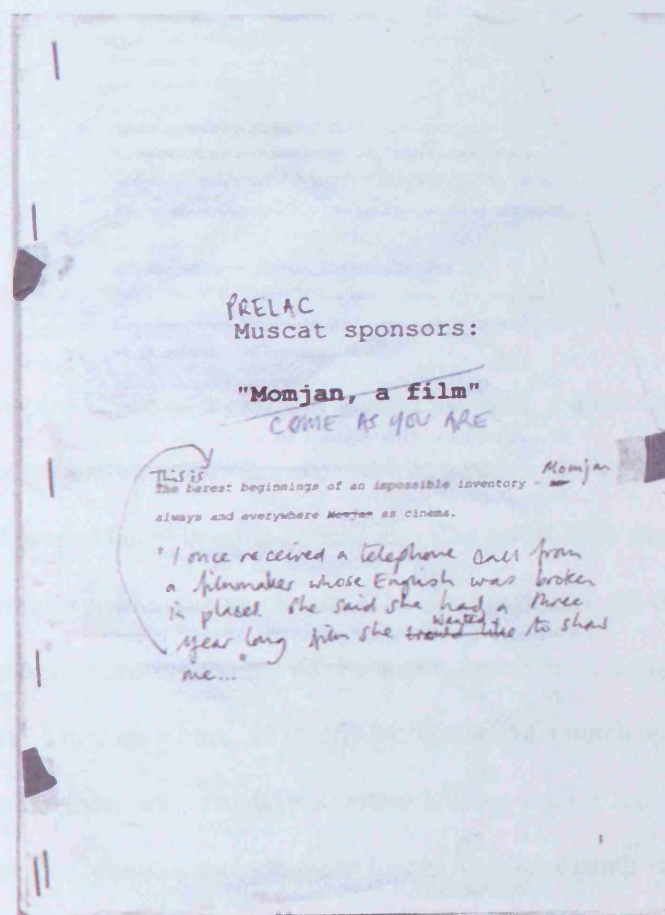
*Close-Up* is structured around a set of uncanny doublings: Sabzian is Makhmalbaf's double and Kiarostami is Sabzian's double, in that he directs the same cast of characters playing

themselves as Sabzian had done previously.<sup>17</sup> Kiarostami presents the doubling of filmmaker as judge and arbiter of unfolding events; as Alberto Elena has noted, the entire film resembles a legal hearing. Much of Sabzian's testimony in the courtroom scene, which forms the spine of the film, is addressed to Kiarostami's camera rather than to the magistrate and in fact Kiarostami directed the trial in accordance to his own filming schedule and requirements, 'One of the biggest lies that I have ever allowed myself to tell' (Kiarostami 1995<sup>18</sup>). The actual court hearing lasted one hour, but Kiarostami kept the participants on for an additional nine hours in order that he obtain his shots (Sabzian actually attempted to sue Kiarostami over the three extra days he spent in prison waiting for Kiarostami's schedule to be freed up and the shoot to take place). The only person who did not remain for the extended session was the magistrate, who nevertheless remains active within the scene by way of fabricated cutaways.

*Close-Up* is a cinema palimpsest, an account of events that writes over those events, the story of a fabrication (Sabzian's pretense) that becomes a truth (the film *Close-Up*<sup>19</sup>). The film is not a documentary and it is not a fiction, it is an existence in itself, a history of its own writing, an event in time made into a film and a film that creates an event in time where the cinema and the lived world each author the other. Kiarostami has commented that 'The reason you like that character (Sabzian) is because he's an artist. That's why he can make up beautiful lies. And I like his lies better than the truth that the others have, because his lies reflect his inner reality better than the superficial truth that the other characters express' (Kiarostami 1996<sup>20</sup>). During his testimony, Sabzian speaks to this point: 'I know that my behaviour can't be justified, but I also think that my love for art should be taken into account' (Sabzian, during the trial, *Close-Up*). Sabzian stands for the privileges of the artist, whose function it is to extend art into life and life into art, whose capacity it is to regard all things as predisposed to manipulation (what Bergson recognised as the ability to extend possibility of things), whose fallibility it is to indulge personal vision, who's task it is to dare to loose a sensible position on the stage of the actual. Sabzian is a director; he has directed life.



Both Sabzian and Kiarostami seem to show the simple and complex ways in which we might still extend the possibility of the cinema, but to live in the social world made-over as a film in production is a difficult thing. A film that is always and everywhere verges on psychosis. Merely the thought of the world *as a film* can bring about uncommon mental and social relations. *Come as you Are* (Eastwood 2005) proposes a film that is the world, where people are variously good and bad at playing themselves. Casting and performing, shooting and directing, are opportunities to be an other, and to re-think the space of one's environment as the place of a film.



### ***Momjan, a film***

On Friday there will be an open casting session for the lead characters in a full-length film production: *Momjan, a film*. No acting experience is required.

**Fri Aug 12th**

**ZAJENICA TALIJANA**

**12-2pm**

#### **Characters sought:**

A TEENAGE GIRL in jeans sat on a white wooden chair.  
MAN 1 with concrete mixer  
MAN 2 with concrete mixer  
BOY in his early teens with concrete mixer  
LEILA, a Croatian woman in her thirties  
The FILMMAKER  
NINA, an artist in her twenties  
A BOY ON BMX  
a group of YOUNG CHILDREN  
a small puppy  
FLORIAN, an artist in his twenties  
IVO, a TV cameraman in his twenties  
An ELDERLY WOMAN sat on a porch with her hands over her face.  
DAVORKA, a curator  
MARKO, artist  
The BELL RINGER  
A group of artists  
EDI, a Croatian, good with construction

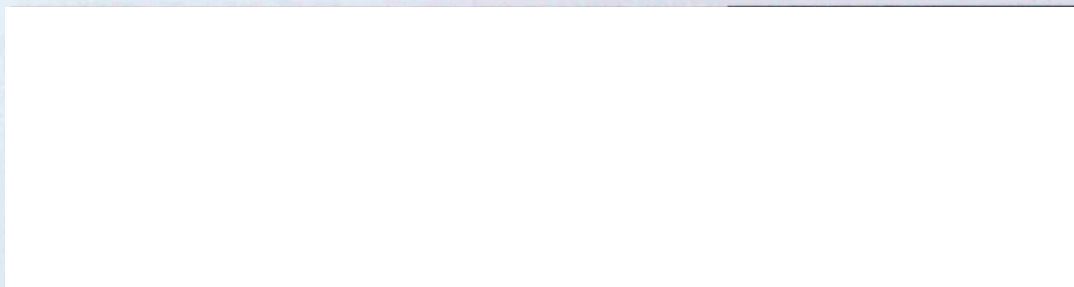
*Come as you Are* began as a meander around Momjan, a quiet Croatian hill town, and became a walk as absurd transcription where as much as possible of what could be seen and heard during the course of several hours became notated as a film script. This was the barest beginning of an impossible inventory: Momjan as cinema. The semi-psychotic act of film writing in this way generated an extensive and diverse list of characters, including: a teenage girl in jeans sat on a white wooden chair; a boy on a bmx; an elderly woman sat on a porch with her hands over her face; workman number four, who stands motionless holding onto a rope; and a female cook, blond with bright ginger highlights and a banshee laugh. An open casting session was held for an afternoon in and around Momjan's town hall. Local residents and visitors to the town turned up to audition, either for the part of themselves, or for the part of someone else. Those auditioning were given the duration of one minute to call to mind their environment as cinema and imagine the town as a film, and to think of the film that might be made as a part of that continuum. Each period of imagining was recorded, and, in addition to this, the performers were asked to reenact the actual lived event of their counterparts or their selves as it was evidenced in the cursory script.



When shooting *Come as you Are* I was performing the role of a director (much in the same way that Sabzian and Kiarostami had), in part masking my motivation as an artist to appropriate elements of the cinematic into a different kind of frame. For example, I was not explicit about the fact that I did not intend to make the film for which we were casting. I became Steven Eastwood as Steven Eastwood, just as each person auditioning adopted the role of a self who will be in a film.<sup>21</sup> *Come As You Are* is a parody of the grandiose ambition (and the inevitably simplistic result) of any moving image media that purports to articulate the experience of the people(s) of a town, or any one person's experience.

When transcribing the emergent and chaotic events of the everyday as a film script, there is the immediate problem of replacing the socially centred self (the viewpoint of the person who was looking) with a camera-I or a camera-eye. A wide shot is not vision. People react differently to cameras than to people entering their social space. A film production always creates a tributary of modified behaviour either side of its lens. Many of the audition sequences include point-of-view shots ascribed to apparently historically determined subjects, and also what we might term 'impossible point-of-view' shots, where the shot/reverse-shot which ordinarily tethers the POV to the subject doing the looking is complicated by a view which could not possibly be seen. For example, the barista who listens to Nirvana's 'Come As You Are' on the jukebox glances off into space and the sequence cuts to his view of the other side of the room. The shot then cuts back to the barista looking, in order to bind and locate the POV shot as a the 'seen 'of a person and not of a camera. After a time, the barista shifts his gaze back to the same eye-line as before. This time the sequence cuts to a locked-off shot of a middle-distance landscape with a fractionally different focal depth, before returning to the barista looking. The causal relationship of shots is the same, and the join of shot/reverse-shot is maintained, only now virtual and actual mental images are confused with one another, having already, by their very existence, created disruptions in the protocol of factual telling. The cinematic lexicon of the image of *seen* preceded by the image of *seer* is made doubly complicated: we know that it cannot be factual, but it also does not work even as a contrivance, owing to the disproportionate distance between the camera and the face of

the person looking. In part borrowed from Andy Warhol's screen tests, these are images of people who are inactive before the camera but active in thinking, and these images are inter-cut with vistas that fail to be adequate as the images of either their thoughts or their present vision. And so an ostensibly documentary cinema (the recording of a series of auditions) fails to represent the interiority of the experience of being auditioned, or of thinking a film, and in doing so makes a playful virtue of its shortcomings. The viewer struggles to locate the image as a factual one, and this pushes the sequence away from the documentary into the realm of art. Not the image of thought then, but the image of a person thinking, which goes against the grain of the documentary by showing stasis rather than movement, the passing of time, the metaphysical restlessness of the live body at rest and the space of thought as that which cannot be documented. When each person imagines, their vision tilts up or down, in order to cut down on immediate present sensory data. This is in part the body of their thought, its exterior, how thought is embodied in time. These are the faces of interiority's exteriority, what Stanley Cavell calls *somatograms*, interior states manifested as surface registers - the qualitative becoming of thought (in this case the thought of a town as a film).



*Come As You Are* (2005)

This model, of subjects playing themselves in the reenactment and re-envisioning of aspects of their lives, is, as we have noted, currently active in Iranian cinema and also manifests widely in television as well as cinema in the form of the docudrama. Such a practice belongs to a cinema tradition dating back through Italian neo realism to Soviet social realism.<sup>22</sup> Filmmakers are also subjects, and it is fruitful to explore the possibility of filmmakers reenacting or parodying their own activity of filmmaking, which is what Kiarostami does directly in *Life and Nothing*



*More. Different Systems of Chaos* (Eastwood/Lewin. 2003) has as its founding principle the forgery of the documentary and the mocking of institutions, both educational and broadcast. The donning of the wig of the BBC (what De Certeau terms *la perruque*<sup>23</sup>) is a means to approach an actual situation with the license to command alterations to it, in the name of a documentary film of implied significance. We made little effort to conceal our limited production skills and the absurdity of our being from any respected broadcast organization (in fact, to some extent we performed this limitation, as a way of donning the wig of bad television makers), and none of the staff or students believed for a moment that we were from the BBC. With the institution of the TV crew suitably ridiculed, the filmmakers, together with the teachers and students of the school, enter into a parallel critique, that of the education system and what we might understand to be a proper form of schooling. In the film, systems of education and of art making, together with the lead characters (the school's Director, artist Redas Dirysz, and the regular target of his art, Alexander Lukashenko, political leader of the Belarus Republic) are mischievously introduced to the audience by way of stamped title captions, inter-titles, the inclusion of directives from the filmmakers to the school's Director add to sense of parody and mockery.



*Different Systems of Chaos* (Eastwood & Lewin 2003)

Entire classes were invented as a result of the collaboration between the filmmakers and their subject: telepathic drawing classes; a class to train 12 year olds to be efficient administrators; peer-to-peer instructional support in the theories of Adorno & Horkheimer, and

the Dada manifesto. In short, the convention of the documentary, along with the convention of a school, is turned upside down. A translator's note informs the viewer that there was no translator; a title caption reveals that the students performed the role of students, and the staff performed the role of educators. In fact, the school was not open during the week of filming; both the students and the staff came in voluntarily to participate in a documentary as an art project. Both *Dailies Mokykla* the art school and *Different Systems of Chaos* the film are testaments to Diryzs' ability to utilise the dictates and restrictions of the dominant political and cultural order as art material. In *Different Systems of Chaos*, Diryzs reveals to the young students the role-play and the fictional elements within his own role as their head of school. He allows them to enter into the fiction he himself occupies, and, in a parallel fashion, the context of the film in the making made a space for inventive falsity.<sup>24</sup>

Reality TV and the diary film are further sites for forgery and falsity. The omnipresence of reality TV plays out the logic of television into absurdum, but it also shows us how reliant we are on mediating agencies to instigate change in our lives. In reality TV, video *is* change; the camera crew creates an enhanced social status in everyday life and constitutes location on a wider stage, it provides a platform for alterity. The Channel 4 commissioned documentary *Daddy's Girl* (Edmund Coulthard 1999) has as its remit the investigation into possibly incestuous relations between fathers and daughters. A team of researchers chose to concentrate their efforts on the Yorkshire region of the UK, a working class area selected as likely to yield people with a low income who wanted to appear on television. The researchers placed casting calls in modeling agencies and local newspapers that were cleverly worded to attract teenagers, particularly teenage girls. The director settled on one relationship, between Stuart Greetham and his daughter Victoria. Although the film was completed it was never aired because Victoria's actual father called the channel having seen the trailer broadcast for the program, and informed them that the man on screen was an imposter. Victoria and her boyfriend, Stuart Smith, had duped the entire production team, playing the media at its own game and supplying them with the images and situations that the broadcasters desired from the point of origin of the programme pitch: risqué

behaviour, drunken fights, jealous arguments, and so on. The couple did in fact want fame and notoriety; they simply chose to wear masks in order to achieve it, their forgery creating a temporary reversal of hierarchies. Channel 4 had no leverage in decrying the hoaxers who had so cleverly revealed the salacious machine of their reality television, and so opted to make a "how did they do it?" film instead, titled *Who's Been Framed* (Riete Oord, CH4. 1999). The shooting of *Daddy's Girl* was Stuart Smith and Victoria Greetham's carnival time, the forgery they produced as a counter force to the modality of the broadcasters. They lived out a new life made possible by the agency and gullibility of the mediating order directed towards them. The reality TV of this nature that we have seen exploding across our screens in the past five to ten years reveals the salability of the everyday: the makeover show (whether it is the making-over of the body, the personality, the lifestyle, the profession, the house or the garden), the backstage making-of film, the music video EPK, the celebrity in a house, the fame academy, the switching lives programme, and so on. Clare Fox (*The Institute of Ideas*) argues that this speaks to the diminished view of human aspiration and shows the hegemonic neo-liberal system in which television sells us ourselves via market populism. The real in TV terms involves *removal* from society (e.g., the Big Brother house). Documentaries are now almost exclusively about personal and not public crisis - the foregrounding of people, in preference of issues. 'Our gaze is distracted by narcissism,' (Clare Fox, speaking at *The Eternal Frame* conference, FACT, 2003).

The televised life is an indication of presence, in the way that appearing in somebody else's dream provides a further guarantee of our existence to the other. Our social connection to the mediating agency is such that if we encounter somebody recognizable from the television or cinema in the street, our sensory-motors often leap first of all to the conclusion that this must be somebody who we know in our lives. Jonathon Couaette's *Tarnation* (2005) is an I-Movie collage of a life lived almost entirely before the video camera. The filmmaker grew up in a tempestuous and possibly abusive family situation, but was handed a VHS camcorder when he was ten and began to record diary footage and also performances to the lens. Over the years, as he encountered the gay and underground film counter cultures, and battled with his mother and

grandparents, this tactic of recording became an augmentation to his personality, the camera as company, and as permission to act-out. Sophie Calle and Greg Shephard's *Double Blind* (1992) is a deliberate inversion of the road movie and diary film. At the outset the two artists agree to go on a trip together with the intention of marrying in Las Vegas at the end. Calle declares that she wants a life lived as fiction; the marriage is an element in the falsity to which she has surrendered. Shephard struggles to match her in this pursuit. The entire journey is mediated through their two video cameras, with Calle's nightly and cutting refrain about Shephard, 'No sex last night.' The diary as format is parodied, with monologues to camera and recorded thought processes throwing the viewer into uncertainty in regard to what was actually lived and genuinely thought rather than fabricated for the lens or added in the edit. Gaps occur because of these voiceover thoughts: they are edited as concurrent with the pro-filmic activity and yet we know that video cannot record thought, it can only give equivalence to it, crudely and after the fact. The camera is held up to the face of each protagonist as a mask, and only significantly lowered when the two reach the drive-in chapel and take their vows. 'We are each writing our own ending' comments Calle, 'the video kept us together. Now that is finished what will become of us?' Calle is asking, if the world is filtered through the performance of the self and its encounter with others, than why not surrender to fiction, why not abandon oneself to a masquerade and replace actuality with diegesis?

These variously moral, political, social and conceptual dilemmas shore up attitudes regarding the engagement between filmmaker and subject, and the porosity between these terms. As we have surveyed, there can be both motivated and cynical uses of the fictive in the pursuit of the actual. The reflexive documentary takes these problems and uses them as a material, or as a determined position of uncertainty. The docudrama uses documentary-like images to lend authenticity to the entirely fictitious reenactment of historical events. The reality TV show makes an arena for a particular kind of acting-out that for the most part is confined to the fishbowl of specific formats and products, and almost entirely lacks true contingency. The method of using television and cinema as a psycho-dramatic vantage point on recent events, and as a means of overwriting those events, invites emulation, derivation, and parody. Some filmmakers scan global

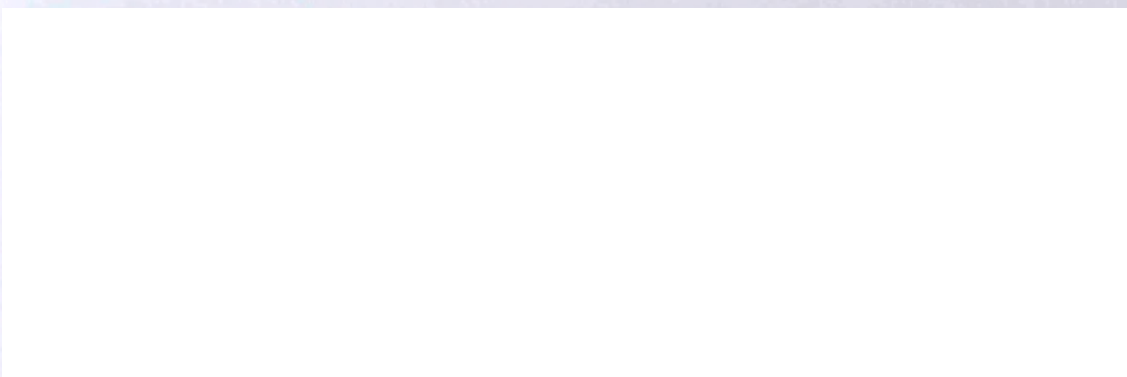


new reports in search of 'Sabzians' who will provide them with a stage for the unfolding film. Paul Berczeller and Glenn Luchford found their Sabzian in Alfred Merhan, the itinerant inhabitant of a particular bench in the Orly departure lounge of Charles de Gaulle airport. For more than ten years Merhan had remained in the airport without a passport and therefore a permit to enter or leave France. Having learned of Merhan's nomadic existence as a refugee in Orly, the filmmakers set out to tell his story and use the agency of the film production to enable Merhan to leave. Thanks to a human rights lawyer the man they eventually encountered now had all of the papers necessary to give up his temporary home, but had chosen not to, preferring to remain in the waiting space of the departure lounge, where he was now regarded as institutionalized. Merhan's life is an open duration, an interval, a waiting space filled by journalists who visit the departure lounge. The fact that Merhan remains in the airport even though he is now free to leave is an invitation: *come here and author me*. And Merhan is merely a passenger in the subsequent film *Here to Where* (Luchford & Berczeller 2001), a feature that gives us no historical details, does not represent Merhan's experience and barely includes its own subject. Instead we are presented with a hysteric director, Paul Hugo, (played by Berczeller) who is determined to make an award-winning documentary. Berczeller has commented that 'I did start *Here to Where* hoping I could revolutionize Alfred's life, and then along the way I understood the utter folly of that and so I played that folly out in my own character' (Berczeller<sup>25</sup>). Hugo's failed production forms the dominant subject of *Here to Where*, but we see only fragments, rehearsals and test shots for the actual film (which, we are to assume, was never made). Berczeller, *Berczeller-as-Hugo*, and Merhan, allow themselves to be used by each other in the advancement of their own particular narratives, sparring with one another for viable fictions. For Merhan, the gaze of the film camera constructs him and sustains him; for Berczeller, Merhan is already a fiction and therefore the only way to be with him is to be false. As Berczeller explains: 'When we got there we were the mother load (to Alfred) because he loves things about himself. It's the only thing that makes him feel like he exists. Otherwise, in a way, I think its fair to say he doesn't exist. Certainly people would not notice him' (Berczeller, *ibid*).

Hugo has plans (which were formerly Berczeller's intentions) for fiction to convey Merhan into a new fact and literally dramatize or 'act' him, with the aid of 'supporting actors' out of the airport. During one pivotal sequence, where the director asks the non-actor Abbas to accompany Merhan out of the building, Abbas, no longer playing his role of psychiatrist, says with some urgency 'This is not a scene in a movie, the project must stop.' It remains unclear even to Berczeller whether by the time of the shoot this was an actual or an invented intention. As he remarks 'The thing about the whole process was it was so mixed up – fiction and reality – I literally have trouble sometimes remembering which was which. I still to this day don't know and that's the thing about Kiarostami: you will never know. When you start this process if you try to really, really find out what happened, then you're being dishonest' (Paul Berczeller, *ibid*). Entering into such an irreverent attitude of filmmaking means that once inside its aberrant frame it is no longer possible to discern what is fact from what is fiction. *Here to Where* cannot be stabilized in our minds as documentary, its methods betrayed by the meta-positioning of the camera, and yet so much of what we are watching transpired in actuality.

The frame of filmmaking here is a double palimpsest, the writing over of a type of film - Iranian cinema - that already writes over the lived world through its use of social non-actors, reenactments and long takes. This idea of cinema as *écriture*, what Pasolini referred to in *Heretical Empiricism* (Pasolini. 1972) as 'writing the real with the real,' suggests that film can also be thought as a *chronotype* (Bakhtin 1984), where filmmaking enters into dialogue with that which it seeks to register rather than remains removed from it as a representational tool. As Jean-Louis Comolli writes, 'the point is reached when the cinema is linked to life according to a system which is not one of reproduction, but of reciprocal production, so that the film [...] is simultaneously produced by and produces the events and situations' (Comolli, quoted in Christopher Williams (Ed.) 1980). For Berczeller, what began as a project for social change became a stage for presenting the problems of such an incentive. The principal motivation for *Here to Where* changed from social transformation to parody, although clearly many of those participating in the film, including the crew, were not aware of this (and this again is an example

of how forgery and modality can occur within the same film production). Berczeller's mocking forgery of the hysteric director who is gradually losing grip of reality was not apparent to the crew. Almost none of the film we are watching is the pro-filmic of the film being made.



*Here to Where (2001)*

We see Merhan's face screen tested through the crosshair of the film camera viewfinder and he protests, 'Off, off, no more,' refusing to be directed to do anything he does not want to and complaining that Abbas (the fictional psychiatrist and his counterpart in the scene) is repeating the same question. When these series of 'takes' are explained to Merhan he appears fully cognizant of the film production process, but disinterested in it.<sup>26</sup> Merhan is an intercedent, a category of non-fixity. Merhan as a subject is the centre of a glass-paneled maze. He is a crystal refracting back into the execution of the film that he is inversely directing, from within the interval he occupies and the gaps in the film's execution. We can see him, and the film follows all manner of routes towards him, but he remains unreachable, his identity, his representation, blocked by the very film that is trying to capture him. He stands for the limit of the factual, and, as a subject, for the threshold of cinema's ability to depict or describe. The same can be said of Sabzian in Kiarostami's film. All we can reliably say is that a film happened to all of those participating; who they are and what occurred outside of the film cannot be so accurately rendered. The most faithful representation a moving image can provide is that of itself. This is why films about films are more than rhetorical and reflexive devices; they are the pocket mirrors with which to stare at the Medusa behind us.

Each of the films examined here demonstrates that the schema of a film in production can function as a site to improvise life anew. Deleuze's idea of a minor cinema is precisely this: a film watcher posing as a great film director; the use of a minor voice in a major language; a group of people electing to film anything and anywhere they please. The moving image is thus reclaimed, now utilized as a form of social hacking where the falsities of the moving image conjoin with fabrications at play in the social space. The powers of the false in Sabzian, Kiarostami, Merhan, Berczeller, Smith, Greetham and Calle are different in their contexts and execution, but there is confederacy in what they find as utility in the strange spaces and uncanny times of their own particular form of film or television. Each of them has adopted the persona of a mediated identity and found in film or in video a philosophical friend with which to concoct their inventions. Their cinema is an overwriting machine that writes over the actual and then in turn is overwritten by that actual. In this cinema everyone is the re-mediator of the everyday; everyone is a filmmaker.

I am suggesting that we think of the role of 'filmmaker' as in the category of what Deleuze and Guattari call a *conceptual persona*, or a *philosophical friend*. Deleuze and Guattari state in *What is Philosophy?* (1991) that the philosopher is in fact the concept's friend; she or he is the conduit for, and the potentiality of, the concept. The conceptual persona, according to Deleuze and Guattari, enables the philosopher and maker to engage in thinking beyond the molar subject, releasing new potentials at a level of molecular becoming, and transcending mind/body dualisms. When we invent a conceptual persona, we can enter into a dialogical relationship with its difference to us. This persona, or friend to an innovative set of ideas which might otherwise not manifest, is the mask Kiarostami celebrates in Sabzian. The conceptual persona I have adopted is filmmaker. He is the opportunity I find to be alien, to be a stranger within my own (cinematic) language, to conduct my attention as another - the other thinker in my thoughts.<sup>27</sup> I *filmmake* in order to be other than I am, in order to become filmmaker *filmmaking*, and this conceptual persona is a drifter navigating the lived world as an affect space, as a series of thoughts, as the film I am making, in order to encounter immanence (what will I find with this film?). An idea for a film is a set of thoughts that attempt to inscribe themselves, in mediation,

and in actuality, on the actual. The various media used have properties that push back against this ideation. The actual asserts enormous force; the thought changes; the thinking mind returns to the idea for the film, and attempts again, with force, to condition the terms of the actual of filmmaking. And then in the edit, all kinds of thoughts, intuitions, and practicalities, push and pull, vie for fruition. The film tactic coupled with the conceptual persona is able to ignore this, to willfully think away from the result and head in the direction of the not finished. This avoids the trap of overly conditioned thoughts.

Bakhtin sees the world as activity; Deleuze sees being as an event, a life as a series of utterances. In Bakhtin, the term 'being' has the etymology of 'co,' in other words being is shared; we are always co-being, a centre and a non-centre in the perpetual oscillation which is *a life*. In Bakhtin, the other is, however, in the realm of completeness, whereas the 'I' that is not the other experiences time as open and always as yet unfinished. In our present perception the other is hard edged, and the self is non-figurative. The classical film as other to our thought and experience is regarded by our sensorium as a complete whole. This is the status of normative cinema, an obsession towards structural integrity, towards a whole, which necessitates endless thought and action subsets of validity, determinacy, and order. My interest is in how the event of filmmaking takes me beyond ontology. Who am I when I film? What has happened to my history, my identity and the capability of my imaginary when I film? How is my recognition altered and my capacity for memory diminished by the distraction and concentration of filmmaking? The emphasis I place on *filmmaking* as opposed to filmmaker, or film, echoes Deleuze and Guattari's focus on *philosophy* rather than philosopher. The destratifying from the psychoanalytic paradigm of Oedipal identity in their philosophy has the objective of releasing pre-personal possibilities.<sup>28</sup> This has direct application in the filmmaking process - hopping from film to film archipelago transverging territories, gathering and then losing knowledge, making mistakes and deploying falsities. And in terms of a missing people, filmmaking as intervention offers both the subject and filmmaker the possibility of emerging, as intercessors, through fictional frames into actual difference.

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<sup>1</sup> Conversation between D.N. Rodowick and Steven Eastwood, Harvard University, February 2005.

<sup>2</sup> In literary criticism, the term *fabulation* was popularized by Robert Scholes, in his work *The Fabulators* (1967) to describe magical realist twentieth century novels that do not fit into the traditional categories of realism. They experiment with subject matter, form, style, temporal sequence, and fusions of the everyday, fantastic, mythical, and nightmarish, in renderings that blur traditional distinctions between what is serious or trivial, horrible or ludicrous, tragic or comic. Fabula is not so much an event chain underlying the subject, as a by-product of the interpretative process by which we throw into relief and assimilate the subject's rhetorical control of narrative information. Its integrity as a concept is not to be found in its relation to any given narrative, but to any given act of narrative interpretation (source, Wikipedia).

<sup>3</sup> Gardin, Lorant and Cahour also write about the contexts of institutional and non-institutional frames, including the courtroom, which bring with them their own sets of linguistic behaviours.

<sup>4</sup> Bernard Gardin writes that 'The notions of "frame", like the related notion of "footing", which refers to the implications of the way it is possible to move fluidly and rapidly between frames (Goffman 1981), is a sociological concept which relates to the individual's way of experiencing the current situation, regulating his/her own conduct and interpreting the behaviour of others. However, aspects of the individual's speech will be directly influenced by the frame in which they consider themselves to be operating' (Gardin, Bernard; Lorant, Françoise; Cahour, Beatrice, *ibid*).

<sup>5</sup> Abbas Kiarostami interviewed by Philip Lopate, *Film Comment*, July - August 1996: 40.

<sup>6</sup> Barbara J. Socor, Ph.D. *The Self and its Constructions: A Narrative Faith in the Postmodern World*. Retrieved March 4, 2000 from: <http://www.iona.edu/academic/artsscience/orgs/pastoral/issues/1997openingofnarrativespace.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Berger and Luckman. *The Social Construction of Reality*. 1966.

<sup>8</sup> Kenneth Gergen *The Saturated Self*. 1991.

<sup>9</sup> Michel Foucault finds in Bakhtinian carnivalization a behavioural intention that endures as a spirit that assists in the extension of 'our participation in the present system' (Foucault 1977: 230-231). Within the considerable risk of Sabzian's pretense, and in the tenacity of his performance, we can find many elements of the upheaval and reversibility of terms theorized by Bakhtin in his analysis of the carnival of the middle ages: the non-finalizability of human character; the overturning of institutions; forgery and parody; the creative act of an unrecognized producer; an utterance in anticipation of an interlocutor; the diacritical play of difference. The carnival is the very loosening of established frames, what Robert Stam describes as, 'a counter-model of cultural production and desire, generated by the oppressed' (Stam 1989: 94-95). Bakhtin writes that 'Carnival is not a spectacle seen by the people; they live in it, and everyone participates because its very idea embraces all the people. While carnival lasts, there is no other life outside it. During carnival time life is subject only to its laws, that is, the laws of its own freedom' (Bakhtin 1984: 7). Bakhtin points out that carnival occurrence ceases around the late Renaissance but the carnival's attitude of wild meaning remains as a theory of resistance.

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<sup>11</sup> Kiarostami, quoted in Bruno Roberti (Ed.) *Abbas Kiarostami*. 1996: 45.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Berger and Luckman (1966: 49) write that, 'While it is possible to say that man has a nature, it is more significant to say that man constructs his own nature, or more simply, that man produces himself.'

<sup>14</sup> Kiarostami, interviewed by Philip Lopate, *Film Comment*, July-August 1996: 40.

<sup>15</sup> Saeed-Vafa, Mehrnaz and Rosenbaum, Jonathon. *Abbas Kiarostami*. 2003.

<sup>16</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1969), Routledge, 1972.

<sup>17</sup> For example, Kiarostami lifts the intimate story of how Sabzian and the eldest son took scooter trips together to the mountains and uses it as a device in his own narrative's resolution, where Makhmalbaf drives Sabzian on a scooter from the prison to the Ahankhah house. We have seen Kiarostami meet Sabzian and now we see, for the purposes of Kiarostami's story and by his design, Sabzian meeting Makhmalbaf. This is a closure entirely orchestrated by Kiarostami, actually occurring and yet authored. On a finite scale every documentary does this, but Kiarostami pushes it to the level of scripting a life-changing event. As Alberto Elena has observed, this meeting is realized in the recognizable mode of a live report, in which we can hear the crew off-camera, anxious and disappointed about the slipshod results (a device Kiarostami used earlier, in *Homework* 1989). Is this a genuine error resulting from the haste surrounding such a pivotal event, or rather a device used to show that some events cannot (must not?) be captured on camera? Kiarostami maintains that the actual conversation between the two men on the scooter ride was very dull and so the 'error' in sound helped salvage the scene. Makhmalbaf claims that their dialogue consisted of Sabzian saying he no longer wanted to make the film.

<sup>18</sup> Abbas Kiarostami, quoted in Stéphane Goudet (1995). Makhmalbaf accompanied Kiarostami to Ghasr prison for the initial meetings with Sabzian, a detail that of course alters the impact of their 'first' meeting at the end of the film. The two directors also met with the Ahankhahs to negotiate the production of the film, although this time the family made sure to check the men's credentials. The magistrate delayed the court hearing by several days to meet with the filming schedule (Sabzian later attempted to sue Kiarostami over the three additional days he spent in prison as a result). Kiarostami filmed the actual trial over one hour, and then did a further nine hours of filming once the judge had left (later inserting cut-away shots to make it appear as though he had been present throughout). Kiarostami then improvised five weeks of shooting based on his courtroom footage, saying that it was the court that produced the film. Kiarostami has commented, 'I shot the film during the day and made notes at night. There wasn't much time to think, and when it was finished I watched the film like any other spectator, because it was new even to me,' (*Kiarostami*, quoted in Bruno Roberti [2003]).

<sup>19</sup> Alberto Elena notes that 'Our expectation is always for the narrative to follow the character "laced" closer to the centre, the stage where things are happening, but this narrative seems to want to stay on the margin of things - each

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time it shifts away from the character who has the better access to the story' (Elena 2005: 88 quoting Gilberto Perez). David Oubina, during a lecture given at New York University in 2006, comments that, '[Kiarostami] ...catches the film on the verges of obscurity. In the whirlwind of superposition, duplications and rewritings, it is impossible to distinguish a single point of view, and so the subject matter of the film becomes singularity malleable, abandons conventional labels and is ready to take on new forms...it is impossible to take up a constant viewpoint, impossible to fix your attention.'

<sup>20</sup> Kiarostami interviewed by Philip Lopate, *Film Comment*, July-August 1996: 39.

<sup>21</sup> We might ask, if somebody had chosen to audition for the part of Steven Eastwood the film director, would they, as a part of their audition, have directed people who were auditioning? This is the labyrinthine relationship the cinema has to our lived experience. To audition to play that particular filmmaker would have been to unleash a duplicate of the lived world as film within a film that was already proposed as duplicate of the lived world as a film.

<sup>22</sup> Gillo Pontecorvo's *The Battle of Algiers* (1965) was cast almost entirely from persons living in the same quarter where the violent events between the French and Algerians had taken place. Ken Loach and Tony Garnett's *The Big Flame* (1969) performs the hypothetical outcome of a Dockers' dispute and features actual people appearing alongside of trained actors, both reproducing and inventing, 'real-life situations,' as Raymond Williams (1976) puts it In *The Legend of Boggy Creek* (Charles B. Pierce 1972), actual inhabitants of a small American town play themselves in the dramatized reenactment of their own traumatic encounter with what they describe as a Yeti. More recently, *Fuckland* (José Luis Márques 2000), the first Latin American film of the avant-garde *Dogme 95* movement, was recorded illegally in the Falkland Islands in 1999. The incendiary provocation of the film is that the only way to make the islands Argentine is to populate them with Argentinians, by making all the Falklander women pregnant. The film features seven professional actors who improvised their scenes with local residents, many of whom were not made aware that they were taking part in the production of a feature film. In *The Blonds* (Albertina Carri 2003) the director, Carri, is played by an actress whom Carri appears alongside of in many of the scenes.

<sup>23</sup> *La perruque* is a French idiomatic expression meaning work one does for oneself in the guise of work done for an employer. De Certeau uses this idea to talk about the socially weak who make use of the socially strong by engineering an independent domain within the situation imposed on them.

<sup>24</sup> The shoot was extra-curricular, but not in fact at odds with the teaching ideology of Dirzys, who makes an entire practice of critiquing the governmental systems he finds himself working within and against, and who has in the past involved his teenage students as political antagonists in his own art work. When the school in Alytus was threatened with closure in 2004, *Different Systems of Chaos* was instrumental in making a successful case for the school remaining open.

<sup>25</sup> Paul Berczeller, in an interview conducted by Steven Eastwood, November 2004.



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<sup>26</sup> Berczeller admits to not knowing whether the tears he cried at the end of the bathroom shaving scene were his own or Hugo's. This sequence consists of one long take, but Merhan is not *taken*. He leaves the 'set' first, and outside asks Luchford, "How did I do?" Berczeller believes it did not matter to Merhan whether he was in fact the director Paul Hugo; he was only concerned with his appearance in the film.

<sup>27</sup> *Allo* is the root for *alien*, but it also means *other*.

<sup>28</sup> Destratification is a process in which the air or water is mixed in order to eliminate stratified layers of temperature, plant, or animal life.

What then, is left? The greatest 'agitprop' cinema that has ever been made: the agitprop is no longer a result of a becoming conscious, but consists of *putting everything into a trance*, the people and its masters, and the camera itself, pushing everything into a state of aberration...

(Deleuze 1989: 219)

... if the brain was invented to surpass a closed plane of nature, does the human in turn invent cinema in order to surpass the closed duration of man?

(Lambert 2000: 288)

I have attempted to bring the body of cinema into the world, to see how it operates there and how it is received – an old and new body of cinema coerced into meeting the old and the new of thought. The next thing to do is to make a film, and this for me is always the next thing to do - another film, always the place of that new film. What the next film will consist of cannot yet be determined, but within these pages I have outlined a number of tactics for its wayward mind and body: a fluid moving image that changes the utterance of the dominant cinema vernacular; a panic cinema that offers entry into the interval of thought; an itinerant cinema that rents space in the place of another; a palimpsest cinema that intervenes in and writes over existing social relations; a free indirect discourse between film and the lived world. The next film is a feature whose duration is not set. It is an unregulated and unfinished narrative that opens onto the world.

The irrational cinema of the time-image explores a world of affect in and around the individual, an aspect of time that is strange to us. Deleuze identified a reformation, a second modern of the cinematic body, where cinema is open to the outside. This philosophy gives us an invigorated belief in the world through the capability of a rogue moving image whose systems are not solely unified and whose art is inorganic and not a representation of reality. The rhizome is the dynamic engine of proliferation for the seriality of this image; it allows difference to emerge inexorably from repetition. This is Deleuze's explicit project - to develop the image of thought from merely that of a model of recognition to one founded on the logic of difference and multiplicity. He calls for a bodily deterritorialization as well as a conceptual

deterritorialization. The practice of this new event of cinema is one that brings together conceptual thought with corporeal extensivity. This method of dissent is to detach from the classical cinema's proper body, so that the moving image moves towards the real and changes our prehension of it. *Cinema into the Real* is what we might call *transfilmmaking* (to adapt Novak's term). It is the implication of the biological into the cinematic and of the cinematic into the biological. The film becomes other than a unity in the meeting of these bodies, it escapes cinematic language in order to dissipate into the filmed world, a space where, as Arthur Kroker writes, 'semiology acquires corporeality, where the sign finally breathes, taking possession of the bodily organs it thought it was only denoting from afar' (Kroker 1992<sup>1</sup>). *Cinema into the Real* is thus the activity of conducting oneself towards the corporeal limit of cinema and the ideational limit of thought. I see a film and it is not my body, although it introduces to my body various sensations of augmentation. I see a film and it appears as my thought, but it cannot think without me – the film and myself are powered by thinking and yet when we meet we are also strangely thought-less.

We know that the cinema is relatively new, and that the specific thought which is to think *of* a film, or to think *with* a film, has not always existed. Conceiving of a film before making it, or completing the medium's cinematographic process in the mind, or, for that matter, thinking the thoughts that a film creates and commands, these are new kinds of thoughts. Before cinema, one could not think time and space cinematically. There is therefore an unthinkable in thought that is cinema, and this is how the cinema shows to us a remarkable set of openings. When in departure from fixed cinematic schemas we enter the noises of the image, the intervals of its assemblages, the wild contingencies of a film in production, and we discover what film and thought possibilities inhere. In terms of pre-production, production and post-production, which is the principal space of thought for the filmmaker, an idea for a film is a set of thoughts that attempt to inscribe themselves through mediation. The various media used have properties that push back against this ideation. The actual environment of the

shoot also exerts considerable force, and we should not neglect the properties of this force, because it is as a result of these contingencies that the thoughts change. The thinking mind of the filmmaker returns to the originating idea for the film, and attempts again to condition the terms of the filmmaking. In the edit too, all manner of intuitive and practical thoughts emerge, assembling and disassembling the raw material. In *Notes on the Cinematographer* (1975) Robert Bresson describes the process of a film production as a series of deaths. The first death is that of the idea as it slips from its spark of thought, and from there follows the death of the idea to the page, the page to the shoot, the shoot to the edit and the edit to the exhibition (not to mention, nowadays, the exhibition to the digital compression). The idea had better be a good one then, and a good idea is one that acknowledges a schema as it moves beyond it and finds space in the not-yet-thought.

A film is always the forcing into being of a thought (from the virtual to the production) in the direction of another virtual (the finished film). Therefore, a film is always in a decline as it emerges and becomes, because it fails to be the real and equally it fails to resemble a film thought. But this failure is precisely where any filmmaker must concentrate their efforts, for it is here where new thoughts and new lived worlds reside. A cinematic thought is to imagine the world as temporally and figuratively different than it is customarily perceived. To then attempt to film the thought is to attempt the impossible, because film and the real are impossible.<sup>2</sup> A *becoming* cinema enters the affect state between filmmaker and film text, an agitated and antagonistic space of difference, where the practitioner of this space purposefully faces the not-yet-known, and the not-yet-thought. For a film practice to be emergent and a form of becoming it must release itself from the binds of the pre-determined or the preconceived. Purposefully thinking away from the result and conducting oneself as filmmaker in the direction of the not finished avoids the trap of overly conditioned thoughts. And yet this is not yet brought fully into critique by theories of cinema. None of the received

modes of film criticism or of production regards filmmaking as a site for seeking to invent what is being lived, *as it is lived*.

The conceptual persona I adopt to think away from conditioned thoughts is *filmmaker*. I have used this persona to enter the space of affect and to think in the interval that is panic, without panicking. This is perhaps the greatest and yet least tapped resource the moving has to offer - its propensity for generating a state of affect without trauma - for this is the state from where intuition and innovation derives. The idea of a panic cinema has been the most elusive concept within the research. A panic cinema comprises of time-images so far from the anchorage of causality that they bring about momentary temporal disturbance, but the sheer virtuality of the cinema, and in particular the cinema's time-images, is what constitutes its comparative safety. The time-image is a potential rather than an actual. The cinema's absent centre is a gift. It can show to us how to trust an interval in thought. Affect does not only occur within the experience of the viewer; it is also the chief state of the filmmaker who relinquishes schema and courts loss of continuity. And so in addition to generating image relations which bring about absences, I am proposing a form of *becoming-panic* by being a filmmaker who is, during the event of filmmaking, entering a becoming which is the film being made, an absence from customary activity. For Deleuze, creativity *is* panic, is life itself, matter in relation to other matter, the emergent and distressing differing of all things. To create is to panic matter, to be an emergent thinker who is foreign to one's material presence and alien to one's own thoughts.<sup>3</sup> In other words, we might endeavour to pass through the gaps opened up by cinema to get to the real that is a gap in our perception, an immanence that is in and of itself indivisible, the ever becoming of matter and of our thoughts and actions.

For Deleuze the time-image does not give to us action but rather what has not yet been thought. Where Bacchus rode drunkenly on the back of a donkey, Deleuze revels in the

purely virtual. Anarchic actions in the lived world are for political activists, for artists also, but Deleuze's medium is thought itself - the virtual material of the philosopher. He asks, what has not yet been thought and what can possibly be thought? The cinema gave the twentieth-century mind its power of thought, its new means to think itself. It chose, predominantly, to continue to think itself as Cartesian, as Hegelian, not as Nietzschean<sup>4</sup>. Lambert writes that 'Thought was enclosed in this resemblance (to cinema) and lost touch with the principle of thinking' (2000: 286).

Deleuze is... suggesting the emergence of a new subject that categorizes space-time: a purely cinematic subject, or I THINK, which is interposed between the brain and the world, or between the brain of a supra-intelligence and the "open" through which the whole itself undergoes a dialectical 'conflagration.'

(Lambert 2000: 265, quoting Deleuze 1989: 159)

Such a philosophy of cinema is not scientific, nor is it even rational, it is an experiment in the creative possibility of thought. A structural theory of the signs and responses in cinema can never constitute a creative movement of thought; it is a form of cataloguing, like the schemas it sorts; it is not a practice. The moving image is an aid in reconditioning the psychic system so that it may traverse the chaotic and the contingent without constructing clichéd response through sensible filters. This is the *time-image*, the cinema as means to think and experience a gap or in-between in thought. It is neither fruitful nor possible to use Deleuze's taxonomy to analyze other texts, in the way that film theorists use Lacanian theory, or the ideas of Derrida (although some theorists do attempt to use Deleuze's terms in this way<sup>5</sup>).

Many claim that the cinema as an inventive site is in its death throes. This may be the case in terms of the monopoly industrial cinema has in the mode of its production and distribution. This may also be true of the received conventions of film or video as art object in the gallery, in spite of its current propagation. Certainly, many practitioners of film and video regard themselves as delimited by the constant problem of choosing between the auditorium

and the black box or white cube. Another kind of space is needed. But from the very first ideas of cinema, before the medium had found its proper form, there has always been an *other* cinema, envisioned around its capability of liveness and duration, and premised on its acute disparity to how we think and observe. This other cinema is a machine for denaturing material indexes. It found a voice in the machinic eye of Vertov's camera, in aspects of surrealist film, in the collective projects of amateur cineastes and the formalism of the avant-garde, and the aberrant fragmented arrangements of time in neo-realism, but the dialect of these minor voices became largely appropriated as styles and discourses into the production of art and commercial cinema. Time-images now most frequently occur as rapid flashing frames in television advertisements or as formulaic altered states of consciousness in large budget Hollywood features. Many of the processes in structural-materialist film or in video art have been appropriated as signs into populist and commercial forms such as the music video and club visuals, and the attitudes of the drift documentary or the essay film are re-used as styles in news reportage and infomercials. At this current point in history the mass media with its mass representations is omnipresent, and the nature of mediation it generates is inescapable. The ruin of such representations is precisely to make a problem of representation, in other words to not speak for another or require another to speak for oneself. I have proposed an itinerant, open-set process of filmmaking, and a cinema that delights in the act of denaturing the lived world, as one means for making mediation our own again. Re-mediating in this way we make a new sense of, and engagement with, the lived world. The moving image is freed up to us as the play of difference between the text and its outside, between the author and text, between the real and the imagined. *Cinema into the Real*, then, is the figural wrested from figuration. It is the figure in itself, unfettered by representations. A cinema into the real does not (cannot) speak using a proper language; it makes utterances from the mucous produced at the periphery of the body of the cinematic proper, child-like, porous, ungainly, but never entirely denying the language it does not properly speak.



We might think of such a denatured form of filmmaking as similar in character to an earlier and often fantastical oral tradition involving the making and telling of stories in and for local communities. In many ways this would also involve a return to the personal, local and durational nature of the early cinema, where cinematographic apparatus traveled to diverse communities and provided images of lives without resorting to telling. The anti-spectacle credo of the amateur cineaste movement regarded the making of the film as more important than the film itself - the cineaste often resisting the role of consumer, instead occupying the roles of producer, projectionist, distributor and participant in one body, with participation being the most potent element.<sup>6</sup> Digital cinema has created resurgence in moving image production by non-professionals and artists who work with the properties of their everyday and post the results on networked on-line outlets such as *Youtube*. Cheaper and smaller cameras, along with more sophisticated software and ever-growing moving image literacy have meant that a vast array of techniques and more spontaneous attitudes has become available to users of the everyday. The more that we make films which depict and/or invent our own personal daily lives, rather than rely on other agencies to do so, the more exciting and imaginative the world becomes. Daily life can be rendered unnatural and experimentally altered, and many more people can engage in the practice of filmmaking. Deleuze said that the people are missing in cinema but they are not missing in underground film events and on-line. We have been given the illusion of a collective – the people – but the people are missing.<sup>7</sup> Film can, and must, be mutable and a force for social engagement. Ways of becoming-imperceptible, or molecular, have been proposed. Hakim Bey declares the Temporal Autonomous Zone as a radical uprising in which a becoming can take place; the Situationists entered this state outside of fixed identity by drifting and appropriating; Artaud screamed for a radical form of anarchic poetry. Cinema into the Real seeks for the moving image to remain as an open set.

The transformation of the moving image involves a shift in its use and function, on an exodus from the narrative security of the filmic text and on the transformation of the subject, both behind camera, on-camera, in theatre or through gallery. This transformation is not solely determined by the filmic text but by the agency of the subject as mental and social (film)-maker. Increasingly I mock myself as expert filmmaker, and mock my own attempts to evince something resolved or meaningful. The declaration that I am making a film that is 'always and everywhere,' and the statement 'I make films wrong' have become tactics for simultaneously parodying the grandiose ambitions of the fiction auteur or direct cineaste and provoking a cinematic dislocation in the mind of the person the speech act is directed toward. The tactic of filmmaking that I have practiced offers the possibility for an uprising in thought and collective behaviour. This is a fissuring of a social continuum, where social relations and habitual thoughts are temporarily supplanted by the act of making a film. When filmmaking, the film thinks us - the people. In this space, everything is a material: the tiredness and waiting of the making process as much as the momentum of shooting; the room tone recorded; the cluttered positions in the pre and pro-filmic space; compositions such as the hitting of marks in front of and behind camera; decoupage, or the stopping and starting of actual and invented occurrences to re-set the camera; re-enactment and repetition; gaps in telling and cracks in representation. How this works may be unknowable. How I work, what the space of this filmmaking yields, or if the films from these spaces even speak, may all be unknowable. If a cinema into the real speaks it cannot yet be understood, because it is not complete; it is still open, a gap. And can we not think of the supreme gap as that of the situation of continual making, which can be ascribed as feminine because it is not solid and does not behave in closed-set form? I am referring to a form of cinema as open whole, or open work, never so much finished as 'enough for now.' I am not speaking of documenting our everyday, but regaining license to envision an everyday, by way of the moving image and its various touches. The Dionysian, nomadic principle in Nietzsche translates as filmmaking exuberance, as facing the everyday with the liberty to transform its appearances.

Narrative is never without slippage and cannot contain all of the rogue elements it seeks to order or repress. Every film bears the trace of its inability to integrate the actual, to synthesize with the actual and yet equally every film bears the register of its inability to be anything other than actual and never fully a film.<sup>8</sup> A film is always made incorrectly, is always an aberration that is forced on the everyday but can never find synthesis in the everyday. The cinema is nothing but a series of denaturings: the denaturing of the lived world as we experience it, which is already denatured by the sensory-motor schema and by language, and then the denaturing of the denaturing, where the film folds into its own becoming and resists an imposed proper of telling. In spite of so much industrious effort, any film desires to remain open and celebrate its propensity for openness rather than its habitual tendency towards closure (the written page has far fewer vibrations to try to contain). The film's Whole, which is its identity (the tether of impossible continuity, of laws of diegesis, and so on) is forever on the verge of dissipating into contingency, towards nowhere, to the world, all of the world; a world which it would then be.

Of course, filmmakers are confined by the physical limitations of a required distributable film object, but to close a film is always to deny a film its potency. A finished film is the attempt at synthesizing thought and the lived world, but a thought, the lived world, and a film each have specific operations and different properties, and it is their very difference to one another that yields innovation.<sup>9</sup> The result of 'completed' or 'closed' art - the art object - is always already old, and liable to cliché, but the 'doing' of art is less prone to habit than the engagement with its result. The essence of creativity is the extending of the possibility of a material and the ever emerging unthinkable in thought. The challenge for any filmmaker wishing to overthrow the dialectical hegemony inherent in their medium is to create voids, to prize open gaps, to tear apart regimes of unity, perhaps even to purposefully never finish films. This is the fluid space Irigaray calls for, to reveal the behind-the-scenes workings of the representations that are manifest in conscious experience, whilst

understanding that to be completely released from such structures (or habits) is to deny the subject an experience of the limits, and illuminations, of language. Irigaray hints at a more fluid subject, one that is immersed in the lived world and whose boundaries are indistinct and always moving. A fluid filmmaker produces a haptic cinema that we can touch, using thick description to brush more closely with the flow of our movements. This is a cinema that resists definition as in opposition to, or rejecting language (classical cinema) and instead emerges from a proper language as the difference to it. This filmmaker takes the film production process, along with its textual offering and the viewer, towards its limit. The places of cinema become collapsed into the spaces of moving image making. The self is not erased, but updated, as *a life*.

The cinema's task is to propose absences to us, and for us to make use of these temporal and social *differences* to occupy a creative becoming, as disparate identities, as sentient bodies in time. Cinema has relied on particular currencies of absence, particularly narrative signifiers. I am speaking for a minor absence, the minor occurrence of lived film, a deterritorializing of the subject, not merely the deconstructing of cinema but the proposition of a new film nature, that of becoming *filmmaking*, that of merging the factual with the fictional in an open Whole of filmmaking. The *I Make Things Happen* trilogy, the *Actually* trilogy, *Like a House on Fire*, *Different Systems of Chaos*, and *Come As You Are*, are films objects that exist as fixed durations with titles, beginnings and ends. They are cultural objects for dissemination. What remains virtual is the excess of these films, the residual thoughts. It is the space of the film object as not-yet thought, and the space of the film shoot as not-yet film, which has commanded my interest as a researcher and a filmmaker. I am not merely making films reflexively, I am uttering the one certainty, that when filmmaking there is always a film utterance - an 'I film' - a speech act which renders image movement from the wild meaning of directing ones thoughts and one's camera to the lived world. It is the differences between film and the lived world that generate new dialogical relations. There is something of the

impossible here - to put cinema into the real and the real into cinema - but to call out across the gap of the not possible makes for peculiar and iridescent utterances. I am speaking now for the moving image as an excess machine, the cinema as a frame for difference, a wig donned, an inverted order, a false world that a missing people bring to our own world. Cinema into the Real departs from Artaud's violence and cruelty by making a free indirect frame for the film production, through which the filmmaker-participant sees his or her own world as a film and film as a world. This frame for thought and conduct is an open set of intercessors and interstices, our new cinematic body, an unknown body that is the actual *and* the cinematic, an emergent poetics, a force from the outside. Such a *film* is an open work and a process that thinks. It is a total film, a film only possible in a nature of thought that cannot yet be, but embodied nonetheless, as the line of flight towards the not-yet of its own cinematic nature.

We are reaching for an expanded understanding of the experience of cinema, a cinema whose circumference is everywhere and whose centre is nowhere. This is a cinema that does not yet exist, although it is already here. Roy White informed me the second day we met that, 'Steven, the film is already made.' To encounter immanence is to be *a life*. One method for this is to be a life as *a film*. What is a film if it is not a life? I once received a phone call from a woman of what sounded like Eastern European origin. She told me that she had a, "Three year long film" she wanted to show me. This small linguistic slip started a series of thoughts about film and the lived world...



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<sup>1</sup> Kroker writes that, 'Refusing the post-Cartesian inhibitions of the "language subordination" of post-structuralism, they (Deleuze and Guattari) went all the way by writing, that is, a schizo philosophy of the tattooed body. Tattooed not just on the outside (although that too), but on the inside: a signated body written where semiology acquires corporeality, where the sign finally breathes, taking possession of the bodily organs it thought it was only denoting from afar' (Arthur Kroker 1992).

<sup>2</sup> Eisenstein does give the example in Charles Dickens of a carriage ride being a tracking shot. Renoir at the end of his life said 'Give my wheelchair a push [...] I'm like a slow moving camera' (Renoir, quoted in Virilio 1991: 63).

<sup>3</sup> Art making is something that matters more to Deleuze than the artist who is creating or the object created (and this is also where Deleuze is anti-hermeneutic and anti-psychoanalytic). Philosophy and cinema (all things, in fact) have an inherent creativity within them, but for Deleuze the process must always be extracted from the result. This is why artists have taken so readily to Deleuze's concepts, because they already think conceptually *and* materially, in response to the changing nature of the material or idea at hand. This is praxis, and this is why, in turn, Deleuze is drawn to artists, filmmakers, writers and musicians, because of their capability for experimentation with the excessive function of a thing, the possibility of a thing. In a paper given at the *Time@20* conference in Harvard, 2005, Raymond Bellour notes that Deleuze was working on a book on the virtual when he died, in which he was looking for a new philosophical form: an art of philosophy. Very few pages remain. As he wrote, he listened to the music of Ravel. He said that he didn't want to write in fragments, although he greatly admired the way Nietzsche had done so, Did Deleuze wish to *become-artist*, to use percepts as opposed to the systematic concepts of written argument?

<sup>4</sup> Rodowick writes that 'Spinoza formulated this idea by defining the task of philosophy as giving knowledge of our *powers* of thought, as opposed to providing knowledge of things' (Rodowick 1997: 174).

<sup>5</sup> Some scholars of Deleuze, echoing the popular criticism of post-structuralism in general, make the point that we have grown too contented rejecting interpretation. In the presentation of his paper at the *Time@20* conference in Harvard, 2005, Ian Buchanan went as far as to suggest a psychoanalytical take on Deleuze. For Deleuze, philosophy and cinema must create crises between concepts and their articulations. This is the space of the not-yet-thought - irrational intervals that produce dissociation rather than association. The cinema of the time-image produces a point outside the world capable of restoring our faith in the world. When the whole is conceptualized as 'outside', it is rendered as 'becoming other in thought and becoming other in identity.' For Deleuze and Rodowick, philosophy is both a construction of concepts and the cartography of their relations. As Rodowick argues, Deleuze does not claim that the time-image transforms thought, because this would be to imply causation. There is nothing prescriptive in this way in the Cinema books, although there is, in the deep sense, an ethic - one must always strive

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to make room for the unthought or to keep thought moving. For Deleuze it is a question of our regaining contact with a world separated through the subject/object split. The time-image creates a situation where thought can happen. In this sense Deleuze is not like Artaud, or Debord, because he realizes that films must not impose thought. What they must do is open up the space for thought. (From a conversation with David Rodowick, Harvard February 2005).

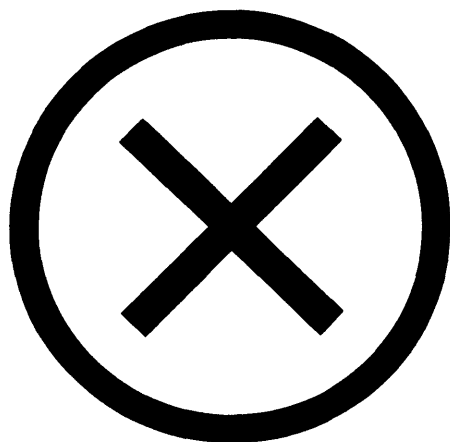
<sup>6</sup> Speaking at the Whitechapel Art Gallery on May 12 2005, Duncan Reekie argued that this societal practice subverted authorship by sharing or involving friends and family and producing family films, holiday films. Cine enthusiasts produced films not as work, but as leisure or play. People watched the films because they were in them, which is a counter form of spectacle, and a statement against the manufacture of leisure. This practice dates back to actualité films. The Lumière Bros would send out camera operators all over the world, to shoot and then project back the footage on the same day. Between 1895-6 and 1903-5 these cinematograph operators functioned as vaudeville acts, presenting films in bars and club rooms and village halls, and then sending negatives and prints back to the main offices from where they would be sent all over the world.

<sup>7</sup> Raoul Vaneigem writes that 'real community remains to be created' (Vaneigem 1983: 39).

<sup>8</sup> Films of pure abstraction and films that are entirely digitally generated, such as *Monsters Inc* (2001) from the Pixar studios are perhaps the exception.

<sup>9</sup> Perhaps we can say this of any art form of any form of invention (and of any action for that matter), but a film's particularity is its resemblance to the lived world. A painting does not perform like the actual. It may have figurative resemblance but it is always a-temporal. Music operates in a similar fashion to cinema in terms of its temporality, but it is always abstraction - no person can react to a piece of music as though it is the world.

**Appendices:**







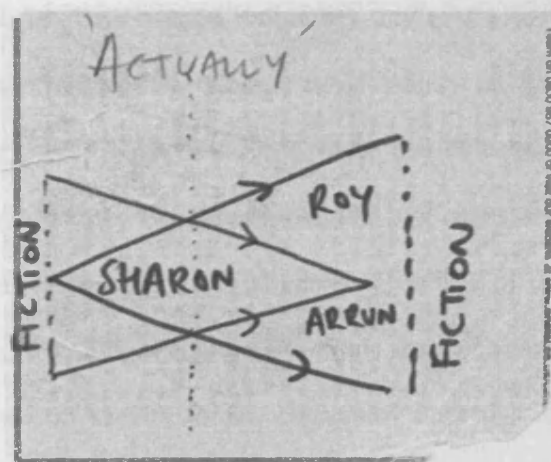
There remains the possibility of the author providing himself with 'intercessors', that is, of taking real and not fictional characters, but putting these very characters in the condition of 'making up fiction', of 'making legends', of 'story-telling'. The author takes a step towards the characters, but the characters take a step towards the author: double becoming.

(Deleuze 1989: 222)

Rather than beginning from a blank page, begin from cliché, for cliché is the last step on the platform of stable narrative, and it is from here that we push off into this condition, of double becoming. Narrative is, after all, only a parenthesis, the bookend to contingency. *Of Camera* begins with a distressed phone call. *The Film We Didn't Make* (2006) begins with a woman delivered by car to a remote coastal location, where she is stranded, a fictional character equipped with the suitably glaring prop of a red suitcase. Not only is she reluctant to be in this foreign place, she is also reluctant to be a character in a film. It is unclear whether she is the character from *Of Camera*, the performer Sharon Smith who played that character, or another character entirely. On a beach the woman encounters two players from the actual, Roy White and Arrun Denman (previously seen in *The Film*). The three characters mix like oil and water, the woman complaining when the two men try to speak to her but remaining bound to them through a number of environments and poorly performed dramatic false starts. Events finally settle on a hillside at sunset in what appears to be the place of a natural and actual exchange. However, within the film is another film: the film we didn't make.

*The Film We Didn't Make* is not the film *Actually*, which I set out to make with the principal performers from *Of Camera* and *The Film*, although, in a kind of Borgesian paradox, the failure to make *Actually* led to a film that nonetheless fulfilled the originating brief. In *Actually*, it was proposed that Sharon Smith would arrive in Bridport 'cinematically,' through a preposterous action-image device such as being washed-up on the beach or ejected from a car. Roy White and Arrun Denman would encounter her somewhere in the landscape and she would

temporarily be taken in by them and become a part of their everyday lives. Sharon would then progress from scripted fictional behaviour to occupying the contingency of the everyday Roy and Arrun inhabit, and they in turn would progress from the nuances of their own actuality to a more mannered and fictional behaviour. Cinematic visual and aural cues initially attributed to Sharon would cross over to Arrun and Roy, and the nature of the directions given to them would change also. In an explanatory set of letters sent to the performers I explained that the antagonism extending from this premise would determine on-screen events. *Of Camera* had described a protagonist encountering her own mediation. *The Film* described two protagonists encountering their mediation, only now through nonfiction. This third film would move from the self-reflexive haunted house trope (*Of Camera*) and the crystalline documentary (*The Film*) to what Roy would call the 'lumpy gravy,' where facets of the previous two films (camera movements, lighting properties, art dept details, musical motifs, even lines of dialogue, not to mention actual recognizable faces) would coalesce in the present of a third film in-the-making. Where *Of Camera* had been a tightly controlled operation that for the most part replicated classical film production, and *The Film* had been an emergent drift, this final panel in the triptych proposed to have the two different approaches coinciding in the same frame, a film drift as orienteering, where each marker discovered would be both a lead and a cliché or dead end. This was my idea. But thought is a virtual and performs very differently to the actual. The idea for *Actually* was very easy to jot down in a notebook but much more difficult to execute.



The actual. The term actually: a real that is realer and more authentic. A stressing of the real over the Real, as that which is definitely not-virtual and not fabricated. The gritty piece of real - volatile, tedious, unusual in its usualness, unexpected and omnipresent. Flat. Very flat. The Act, and to act. Action! which is to be captured in the act. Also, to distract. ACTuality. The secondary image that supports the primary image. The image fact. Actually. I returned to the site of *The Film* some fourteen months after shooting it, having secured the involvement of the same crew and all three performers, and with the idea to attempt to combine two very different pro-filmic spaces, the one being fictional and the other being actual and contingent. I brought with me a piecemeal script that had one significant structural arc, outlined in the notebook drawing above. Each performer would help the other with the necessary mechanics and improvisation of this transition from fact to fiction and fiction to fact. The film's working title, *Actually*, was a two-fold play on words, evoking the early Lumière Brothers' *actualité* films and also the semantic occurrence of the word as a precursor of authenticity to a statement (for example, 'She *actually* meant what she said').

To help the concept along I conceived of Sharon as a histrionic character, not so much a protagonist as an antagonist. She would arrive both fictionally and actually in the town of Bridport, and Roy and Arrun would make whatever sense of her and the situation they saw fit. I did next to nothing to develop Sharon as a character; I ran no tests and no rehearsals; I did little in the way of mental preparation for what I would ask any of the performers or crew to do. I proposed some poorly written vignette scenes, based mainly on Sharon provoking Roy and Arrun, and Arrun dealing with Roy's low blood sugar and diabetes, and then did nothing to realize them. A cast and crew were assembled, film apparatus was erected, and then the filmmaker resisted directing anybody to do anything. This lack of direction created a shift in confidence, disposition, and activity within the pre-filmic space. The actuality and awkwardness I had imagined taking place on camera found a becoming instead behind it, where the camera could not catch it; between intention and contingency, it turned with the turn of the camera. Every

planned scene collapsed at the point of execution and was replaced by the predicament of filmmaking. And so the group found themselves situated in the act of filmmaking, but without a film to make. We were left instead with the corporeality and ideation of a film in the 'not-making'. This was an attempt then to pitch the format of the script and the shot list against the phenomena of the Open Whole, one always vying to assert itself over the other; in other words, to try to 'produce' the event of the film not working and to continually re-integrate this failure into the plan for a success (and vice-versa).<sup>1</sup> This in effect is the process of salvaging. Thus, the film *Actually* failed, and emerged instead as *The Film We Didn't Make*. The following dialogue is transcribed from video recordings made during the shoot:

ARRUN

We had this idea that you would be this fictional character and Roy and I would meet you but we would remain natural. We wouldn't be drawn into your fiction. But it didn't work. Because Roy and I were dragged into your fiction... But that was like a thread of sorts through the film and what it lead to was the shoot on the top of the hill at the Look-out where we were just ourselves. So this idea was actually a failure, but that was the film, the fact that it failed.

SHARON

But the weird thing is that in Steven's original proposal he said that I would arrive as a fictional character and that somehow we'd reverse roles.

ARRUN

But didn't we change that idea?

SHARON

Yeah, I didn't think it would work. I don't think anyone really thought it would work, but what actually happened was there was this kind of - without really wanting to - we ended up trying to enter or being dragged into the fictional, being compelled to try to pretend in the fiction, and it being uncomfortable, and then actually ending up with this really kind of natural conversation where I realized I'd sort of just got to know you a little bit and that we all felt quite relaxed, lying there. And that, that in a way somehow echoed the original proposal, but it went a very different way around and about it.

ARRUN

When we were shooting, the fact that Roy and I had to respond to your fiction, it immediately drew us into it, I mean its impossible for us to be natural.

SHARON

Yeah, because you're implied.

ARRUN

The only time we probably - we could say - we did remain natural was when we ignored you at the Look-out. But then was that natural? Because we wouldn't normally ignore somebody.

SHARON

The problem is this word 'natural' is really weird because what does it mean, being yourself? You're a different version of yourself in different situations... when I was pretending to cry I was trying to not laugh and there was the moment when I think you turned away from me, which could be read as one thing, but I think it was to do with you trying to not laugh.

ARRUN

Yesterday, when there was a slight amount of despair, well perhaps that is an exaggeration, but we were kind of searching to kind of find something and at one point we were on the beach and you [Steven] said "Oh, well lets just roll and at least capture something," you seemed a bit downcast and my heart was starting... to sink because I thought, "it's going badly." But I mean all that clumsiness was part of the film and you can use that, I think. When I look at it now I actually think that the whole shoot has gone quite well and you can produce a good film, because the film is going to be that it wasn't going very well. I actually think you can go away and produce a good film with what we shot. And this film has ended up being something that I didn't expect it would be. We have reached somewhere and produced something, but I just wasn't aware of it at the time, I thought it was going badly and it was a mess, and it was, but that was actually quite good.

SHARON

I think there's that thing that there's two rules of something that is improvised or tries to be intuitive or spontaneous, like you said - find the film rather than dictate the film, and that, actually, it's not just about making it up as you go along, i.e. [that] its easy to just film anything - let it all hang out. It's actually really hard work to be that free.

STEVEN

It's so much easier to work from a story and a script.

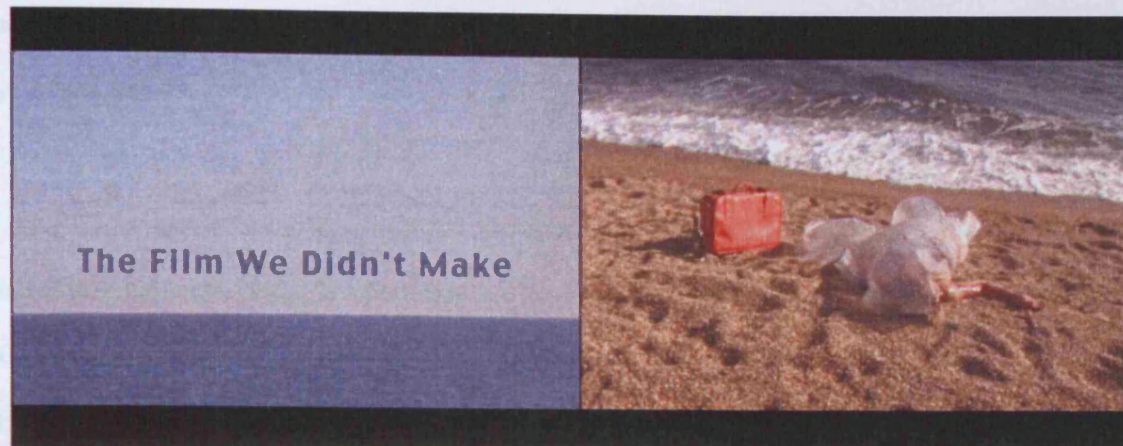
SHARON

But then its like what Roy said, "We're just dollies in a field."

ROY

When Sharon went into acting mode, or what I thought was acting mode, because I wasn't sure actually... Most of the time I wasn't sure, and I was just saying to Sharon this morning, I wasn't sure, I don't think anyone was sure what we were doing half the time. It just all fused up. I just felt that it had to run-on somewhere else, with Sharon maybe, and someone else. I was hoping we could be dispensed with, well I could be, or me and Arrun could be. You know, the story could go on. As far as I can see everything is going to be all right now anyways. It goes where it will, as it were.





*The Film We Didn't Make* (Eastwood 2006)

Over the course of the production I deliberately courted mishap, doubt and confusion. The objective of placing fiction and actuality together in the same film frame served as a trajectory, but this line of flight was subject to all manner of counter-lines. The mental image I had of sequences and events for the film (the film I was thinking) gave-way to the immanence of my own inability to make the concept operate in the way that I had conceived. I was thus propelled into an affective space where I was forced to think from the outside of the concept. In addition to this, the clumsy 'making-do' from the cast and crew created new lines of flight, of various intensity. At different levels and at different times every member of the cast or crew attempted to rescue the film from its own implosion. In the rushes there are incomplete dramatic situations, mostly involving Sharon's character meeting Roy and Arrun: sequences of arrival, encounter, waiting, irritation, social unease and feigned indifference. Each variation manifested as amateur dramatics, with Sharon a guttural, glaring tear in the frame, and Roy and Arrun veering from acting-in, with Sharon, to acting-up and against the proceedings. 'May God guide us downhill,' Roy commented. We can begin to see in the actions of Roy, Arrun and Sharon the fruitful partnership between non-schematic filmmaking and salvage. One scene devised by the ensemble involved Sharon being discovered by Roy and Arrun at the shoreline, wrapped in a clear tarpaulin and made-up with fake blood (pictured above). This scene was planned and executed by the group with the exception of the director, who waited with the equipment, further

along the beach. This particular phenomenon, of recovery, occurs accidentally and cannot be orchestrated.

Jean-Louis Comolli writes that 'the spectacle is not life nor the film reality [...] the actor is not the character. [This] is a certainty we have to be able to doubt' (Comolli 1978: 45<sup>2</sup>). In John Cassavetes' *A Woman Under the Influence*, Gena Rowlands' character Mabel cooks spaghetti for her husband and his work colleagues who are gathered around the dinner table exhausted from their shift. The scene plays out in time with improvisation, scripting and the actual behaviour of the cast co-existing, so much so that at one point a worker raises his glass and proposes a toast: 'To Gena!' 'To Gena!' the other workers chime in reply. The boundary between diegesis, discourse and non-fictional activities is in this moment blurred - Mabel is Rowlands and isn't Rowlands, at the same time. In the opening sequence of *The Film We Didn't Make*, Sharon Smith is, similarly, at once character, intercessor, and performer. She is Sharon Smith inhabiting the situation of Sharon Smith who has been asked to perform, just as she is also the character performed who remains unnamed. This shifting disposition is in essence what improvisation is, the process whereby performer, character, and 'stage' rotate around one another in a constant movement of invention. Sharon, familiar to the viewer from *Of Camera*, is again subject to the manipulation of a film-in-production, trapped in the back of a car and commented on by the off-screen voices of the director and camera operator, only now she voices her reluctance and disapproval, angered by the immanent imposition of fiction. The car sequence prefigures her apparent entry into a dramatic space where she is abandoned to artifice, *in character*.

'Marionettes in the fiction mill' is the expression Roy White had used during the recording of *The Film* to describe what he regarded as commonplace disingenuous behaviour in social encounters, and he expanded on this with two further expressions, 'Dollies in a field' and 'the school play' to articulate how he felt when asked to falsely perform on camera. So why bring Roy, Arrun and Sharon together in this way and ask them to shift between the actual and the fictional? I wanted three pre-existing film personas to occupy screen space together and to work



with the awkwardness, inertia and narrative confusion that would inevitably result. The tension within the film frame between trained actors working from a script and people who are not actors (and therefore cannot affect the text with performance training) constitutes an additional, an unpredictable material, and this unpredictable terrain has been traversed by such filmmakers as Werner Herzog, *Strosjek* (1976) and *Heart of Glass* (1976), and Harmony Korine, in *Gummo* (1997) and *Julien Donkey Boy* (1999). During the shoot Roy and Arrun invariably attempted to act-in to Sharon's character's situation. The social order compels an individual to re-contextualize themselves to others, for to be social is to be on an improvisation continuum - I wipe my mouth, you wipe your mouth; you speak quietly, I lower my voice. Exceptions to this become social sirens, wailing with quietness, or with lack of eye contact, unable or unwilling to perform in-context with others present. I set out to utilize the self-consciousness of non-trained participants caught ad-libbing in a freefall drama, searching for what was appropriate and contextual to the scene in order to fill up and replace the awkwardness. Arrun and Roy took on dramatic personas that they felt would fit with Sharon's performed identity, with the intention of giving the film proceedings some form of consistency or content. They improvised towards Sharon, in the direction of correctness of context. They did not ignore her and neither could they be how they had previously been. In other words, when left with nothing but the situation of their own awkwardness, Roy and Arrun *acted-in* to where Sharon, as a half-formed character, was *acting-out* from.



The resultant struggle for narrative belonging, for behavioural similarity, is both emblematic of the consensual manner in which we arrive at social attitudes to one another - whether for the lived world or in anticipation of the finished film - and also the register of a gap which can and does open up for differences in our identities.<sup>3</sup> The natural pro-filmic space is rendered unnatural by the film apparatus and the attitudes addressing it, and this denatured space exists as a site for acting out these differences and emergent attitudes. The failing film enables an *in-between* of difference, where ideas are proffered and social attitudes take on unexpected directions. They are getting frustrated. They are upset. They are waiting for me to tell them, to tell them something. I only say that this film is a life - a life like any other life - a cluster of situations, within which I found myself sliding between the social compulsion to provide a worthwhile outcome (to make good, to make it right) and an opposing compulsion, to surrender to the emergence of the immediate situation, to become film and become filmmaker, painfully, misguidedly, dangerously; after all, the word *experiment* has origins in the word for danger. By appearing to fail or indeed by actually failing, an opening is created onto the space of affect, where awkwardness and discomfort must be carefully negotiated. This is the interval of doubt, and the event of this doubt is carried over in residual form to the event of watching the film. Indeed, it is this very aura of doubt and discomfort that I find to be the most experimental of environs, for to bring to this zone a group of people on set, and a group of people in an audience, is to take them beyond habitual safety to an in-between where they must both doubt and trust, salvage and re-frame what they had quickly decided as bad as now in fact intentional. Affect floods into error and through failure, and if it can be contained by a film and not subside into the merely useless, then a specific nature of thought that would commonly be closed down is prolonged as open. It is possible to postulate a theory of bad acting here, because it is precisely a loss of faith in the integrity of the film text as good brought about by bad acting that will help to keep affect flowing. As Artaud wrote, 'I put myself in this state of impossible absurdity in order to try to generate thought in myself [...] spaces for life, spaces which did not exist and which did not seem to belong in actual space' (Artaud 1976: 79).

This space is the situation of the will to *make good* in inventive conflict with the will to *make-do*; with social conventions of rescue and salvage, based on what any given person imagines to be a properly realised film.<sup>4</sup> Such a lived film is dependent on the failure of its own narrative and purpose. The film object is a destiny, but one that collapses into various emergent lines of film flight brought into being by the unfolding and changing everyday of the filmmaking situation, and the new thoughts and ideas of those persons filmmaking. The reflexivity in *Of Camera* and the nomadicism of *The Film*, (with its cluster of becoming imperceptible subjects, subjects resisting representation) conflate in *The Film We Didn't Make*, not so much to forge another type of film as to dismantle the integrity of film *as object* altogether. In *The Film We Didn't Make* the veil which we called *film* (the idea of film overlaid on the actual - a prismatic, crystalline, aberrant mental invention) finds its fullest register. The lived situation of filmmaking is taken one step further, to the level of predicament. This predicament is a film failing, or as Roy White has it, a 'Cul-de-sac'<sup>5</sup> from where the film 'Perhaps won't go.'<sup>6</sup> We go wrong. The lived world rushes in without manners, the outside forcing its way in and offering a becoming. Deleuze has defined becoming as that 'which transforms an empirical sequence into a series: a burst of series' (Deleuze 1989: 275). In *The Film We Didn't Make*, the empirical sequence of the script gave way to the burst of series of the willful failure to come near to realizing that script, the burst of series of our own everyday around this breakdown. Every person tolerated the shambles, out of generosity, towards me perhaps, and perhaps from a belief in my ability as a filmmaker to make something of this predicament, but predominantly because of a delight found in affect through the conduit of the cinema.

Somebody commented that I could only be capable of making a film in as careless a manner as *The Film We Didn't Make* having made other films reasonably well. It is my assertion that no representational film is ever made well, and is never in synthesis with the everyday it attempts to depict. Documentaries and fictions rarely work in the way that they were conceived. They are forces of will, battering machines of apparatus, crew, cast and design that bulldoze over the everyday, never wishing to fit within it. Every representational film made, whether a high-

production narrative or low-end documentary film, is an imposition on the everyday rather than an element belonging to it. And yet what it fails to represent through this force of imposition it nonetheless makes evident, in a sort of reverse-attraction.

The film picks up – indicating by framing, shot angle, lighting, dialogue mention, musical underscoring, and so on – the notable elements (to be noted in and for the progress of the narrative which in return defines their notability) without for all that giving up what is thus left aside and which it seeks to retain – something of an available reserve of insignificant material – in order precisely to ring ‘true’, true to reality. In short, the film-narrative is a regulated loss, that loss becoming the sign of the real.

(Heath 1981: 135)

It is my particular interest that films *are* made and that the specific type of industrious social group called people who are *filmmaking* exists. Whereas most films work extremely hard to erase the clumsy, ill-fitting, abortive nature of their manufacture, I revel in the entire performance of filmmaking, as a thing in my life. I make films. If we acknowledge that making moving images of our lives *is* one of many things we do, and that it is not something an industry need do for us, then this propensity for rendering time in a way that is different to the lived world can be an experiential prosthesis for the mind and the social body: film as another lived time, a thinking machine, a means to render abstraction and poetry rather than representation. During filmmaking - the active forgetting of how to make films habitually enables me to think and feel *unhistorically*; it saves me from history. This forgetting is not what Plato called the disaster at the very origin of thought, but rather thought's re-birth, Nietzsche's eternal return as cinematic affirmation - a creative destruction as affirmation, to engage with film and video and the world as a lover, as a fool, with head spinning into the unknown; to avoid stagnancy, by always remaining receptive to possible lines of flight, 'Our tendrils cantilevering into a future we are unlikely to recognize' (Marcos Novak 2002).

Thus, all I have to do is will myself again, no longer as the outcome of previous possibilities, not as one accomplishment out of a thousand, but as a fortuitous moment, the very fortuity of which implies the necessity of the integral return of the whole series.

(Deleuze, quoted in Analytica.com<sup>7</sup>)

In the letter that I sent to the cast members proposing the project I wrote, 'At the moment I'm imagining the Bridport landscape, two incongruous characters. They have met by chance and know nothing of each other. What are they thinking? [...] There will be one dramatic incident, when Roy, Sharon (and Arrun if he is willing) are momentarily drafted into a deeper narrative.' It seemed to me, through all of the chaos of the shoot, that the important thing was to have brought film back into our lives; only this time in a way that meant emergence and happenstance had intersected with suggestion and artifice, but having dragged the actual along the coastline and hillside and into the fictional, and then stumbled, with half-developed derailed inventions, back into the everyday, I was suddenly keen to turn my back on the mess we had created, in the hope of the fortuitous moment Deleuze speaks of. And so I invited the cast and crew to rest on the hilltop in front of the Look-out and again offered them the space of a 400 foot magazine (film as *potlatch*), as a time that could roll away, and where the protagonists could do as they saw fit. In the sudden cut between the digital crispness in the scene by the Look-Out and what Roy White had called the 'Lurid technicolour' of celluloid now filling the frame of the three laying in the grass, the dialogism between film and video (the differential relation between the two mediums) is apparent, if contradictory. The celluloid signal of fictivity is wrongly cast in this apparently *vérité* sequence, as had the pixel precision been in the amateur dramatics that preceded it. The conversation in the grass plots an unexpected curve from artifice to actuality, and a shift in the disposition of the entire group, affected and changed by this long awaited indiscernibility between fiction and fact.

What happens? The clapperboard announces change, ushering in a new time, a fresh attitude. All of the characters are together and resting, awash with the rich colours of 16mm. Time draws out a new behaviour. The score, lifted from *Of Camera* makes a line through the take, running out of force as the first words are spoken. Roy says 'I am going to walk off-set a moment and have a gander at Portland [...] and you and Arrun can be *Stars*.' A complex form of flirtation follows, as Sharon offers to feed Arrun chocolate and he declines. Although she is still in costume and accompanied by the red suitcase, Sharon's disposition has changed. So too has

Arrun's. He is no longer silent and begins to offer information about his former partner to Sharon, as their banal and at times humorous conversation unfolds. 'Sometimes do you wish that you ate chocolate though?' asks Sharon. Arrun replies, 'No, not really. Don't you find once you've had - I mean - you enjoy it as you eat it but you feel a bit crap afterwards. Don't you find that?' There is a feeling of relief, as though the viewer can also rest now in this duration, comforted by the absence of scenarios, reassured by the strong composition of the frame pointed down from above onto the players, who are laying side by side in the early evening wind-blown grass. And yet we cannot confidently shake off the residue of the previous histrionics and amateur dramatics. In spite of the seemingly natural content of the conversation, this exchange is complicated by subtitles, necessary owing to the poor sound recording of the scene. We have entered this natural and factual scene with the invitation of a musical quote and are now following its content through a textual device usually reserved for foreign language dramas.

Sharon appears as though still performing. She leans closer to Arrun and asks what happened finally between he and his girlfriend. He replies 'Well, she died, sadly, but I don't really want to talk about it.' Consistently during screenings of *The Film We Didn't Make* the audience laughs collectively at this quiet declaration. Perhaps this is because the viewer reacts to Arrun's words in the context of the style of previous statements made by all three of the protagonists, and in the wider context of the former preposterous attitude of the film (it's 'bad' acting), and therefore thinks of his reply as a scripted line. There is a tension that comes into existence around Arrun's statement, and one exerting force in several directions. It is accurate to say that this is the most eventful moment in the film and that it constitutes precisely the kind of confessional testimony that the normative documentary filmmaker obsessively looks for. And yet, this precious piece of content has the effect of causing discomfort, and issues of accountability, privacy and ownership rush to the fore. When a film that is willfully playing with falsity unwittingly makes a space for a truthful declaration, this declaration changes both the film and the filmmaker. It forces the filmmaker as arbiter of frames and assemblage into the role of an agent who is representing, who is suddenly the guardian of this moment, the person who

represents an *other*. This sense of accountability is thrust into a complex dialogue with the realization that it was the falsity of the film and its foolish conduct that enabled the emergent encounter. Much in the same way as Kiarostami's *Taste of Cherry* (1997<sup>8</sup>), *The Film We Didn't Make* comes to an end outside of its storyline, in a peculiar intermediary realm where characters and the players of those characters are permitted to fraternise with one another, to speak across chasm. Here, where cinema is well on its way into the real, the characters have merged with the world and left the film, and the subjects have merged with the film and left the world.



The last image is of the impression left after the long take that forms the final third of *The Film We Didn't Make*.



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<sup>1</sup> Jess Wiley, one of the crew, renamed the production *Lost in Bridport*, after the documentary *Lost in La Mancha* which has as its subject the failed attempt by Terry Gilliam to make a feature film version of Don Quixote.

<sup>2</sup> Jean-Louis Comolli, *Historical Fiction: A Body Too Much*, *Screen* Vol 19, no 2 1978: 45 Comolli describes this as 'a double game: it is him and it is not, always and at the same time. Neither of the terms ever really prevails over the other, each keeps the other as a ground against which it stands out' (Jean-Louis Comolli, (1978) *Historical Fiction: A Body Too Much*, *Screen* Vol 19, no 2: 45- 48) quoted in George Kouvaros (1998) *Screen* 39:3 autumn.

<sup>3</sup> Goffman argues that, when faced with an interaction, the different partners try to maintain a consensus, or to avoid a breakdown. If this does not happen, the participants run the risk of becoming engaged in a power struggle. To do so, the different partners must first reach an initial agreement on the definition of the situation which is wide enough to avoid contradiction and which consists mainly in defining who can talk about what. This is what Goffman calls the 'temporary consensus.' This consensus must be a socially satisfying solution for the participants whatever their status is. See, Goffman, 1959 and Goffman, 1981. In order to preserve this temporary consensus and to avoid breakdowns of definition, the participants bring into play preventive processes to avoid them and corrective processes to repair them. To preserve his own projection, the actor uses defensive techniques. A participant uses techniques of protection or tact to save the definition projected by somebody else. When somebody is in the presence of others, his activity has all the characteristics of a long term commitment: regardless of his precise aims, it is in his interest to control his interlocutors behaviour and especially the way they treat him in return' (Bernard Gardin, Françoise Lorant, Beatrice Cahour, *Theories of Communicative Interaction* (3)).

<sup>4</sup> A pertinent question would be, is filmmaking consensus oriented or conflict oriented? This question relates to the differing attitudes Goffman and Vollochinov have towards the manner in which social situations achieve formation. Goffman regards social attitudes as consensually arrived at, Vollochinov rather sees them as arising from conflict. A film in production imposes itself on the everyday, creating upheaval and uprising. Its conflicting nature - its conflict with the natural - and its very difference in seeing, in behaving and in assembling, is what makes it transformative. The interaction between the virtual film (the idea), the situation of filmmaking in the lived world (the idea into practice), and the lived world in front of the film, is always one of antagonism. The containment of contingencies is the constant task, and the synthesis of antagonism is the goal.

<sup>5</sup> Roy White quoted from *The Film* (2004).

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Scott, Analytica.com (April 2005).

<sup>8</sup> Abbas Kiarostami commented wryly in an email to me that he would very much like to see the film I didn't make.

### Sc. 13. The Film To Come

The majority of my work over the past five years has dealt with the excess of the moving image, in both factual and fictional form. I have applied a cinematic vernacular to actual environments in a number of film shoot interventions into public places. I produced a series of reflexive video pieces, the *I Make Things Happen* trilogy, in which characters encounter the limit of their own mediation. Larger scale pieces such as *Of Camera* and *Like A House on Fire* follow a process of cinematic fiction collapsing in on itself, turning inside out, so that characters become caught up in edits and traumatized by distress applied directly to the celluloid or video image. *Different Systems of Chaos*, *The Film*, and *The Film We Didn't Make*, are more carnival and emergent in attitude, their content the lived world of being the subject of an ostensibly factual film, cut adrift. Together these pieces form a body making propositions towards an aberrant and embodied new cinema, one that is neither habitual nor representational but rather itinerant and excessive.

I am reaching the end (the limit) of my inquiry. I wish to fully deterritorialize cinema, and film my way out of the ends of this process. I want to fall off the cinema's edges. And so, I propose a not possible film, a film that would make Orson Welles' plans for *Heart of Darkness* seem like shooting ten seconds of video on a mobile phone. This film, that is, *the film to come* (a play on Blanchot's *The Book to Come*) is the de-naturing of the lived world into a perpetual film in progress. It runs the cinema off this world and into our minds. And so it comes to you as a provocation, a flight line, an idea ad absurdum...

to fully deterritorialise cinema, to film our way out, to fall off the cinema's edges. To propose a not possible film, a film that would make Orson Welles' plans for Heart of Darkness seem like a ten second clip sent to You've Been Framed. This is the film to come, a perpetual film in progress. It runs the cinema off this world and into our minds and comes to you as a provocation... Spatially, the film is uncertain. It is ill defined, a set of shifting tectonic plates. We are thinking of it now. Characters are being drafted, tested, and written. The characters are being written into a real situation. Ways to start a film: dead body car crash got killed lost love lost home lost hope disaster. Repetition and consistency. Disaster. Always tell them three times. Indian Jones hates snakes. Stan Laurel is afraid. Bruce Willis is washed up and alone. We should find an old story, an adage, a good enough lack. Lets say: losing love. Losing love, and it changes the depth of field, it is her new lens on the projector, it is his clumsy continuity. Lets say that losing love is the lack that derails our protagonist and propels them into disaster, so much so that the celluloid material and video tape itself cannot hold on to the image or possibly conduct the sound. Losing love is a technical despair, a spreading of the world into the unfamiliar, as the media corrupts and the feelings go everywhere. There they are, burning again, in the gate, overwriting the script, contravening the frame, the time-line, the room in the room, the projection... Our projector hesitates to show it. This is a nervous projector. There are no seats and there is no auditorium. These are scattered centres from where so many circumferences were given up. The centres are everywhere. The film cannot be found - it continually starts up again, from a dead stop. The script - disaster - the script will never materialize. But, nonetheless, the film is "pitched". There are outlandish, infuriating meetings with film producers and gallery curators. We will play the monster at its own game. I will get upset and so will you. We are very difficult to work with, because of our vision. A lavish set is constructed. You will insist upon a crane and I will get a wind machine and some rain. A composer should start on a score. It is an awful score, really awful. All of your friends are in it, and mine, along with people we do not like and people we do not know. Here, there and everywhere, you will find traces of the film in production. Posters for the film are on billboard hoardings. There is one outside your window. It was pasted and removed but it came back again. You are humming the score. The light is extremely good around you. You are making love and there are people watching but you manage to make it seem real. And now the audience and the film are having sex with each other and the screen is not big enough. But we are tired and the movements of the film slow. Today the shoot happened very quickly. Much of what was carried out has been destroyed. Only pieces remain, some good takes, some bad takes. Ways to end a film: open road, a camera that rises, you and I kissing, waiting at the station and looking straight ahead with our eye off camera and our thoughts on the next scene. Cut. Thank you. You and I are good in that film to come.

I can't know much about it, but I know it is called *The film to come*. It will involve meeting people and asking them to enter into fictions - the ones we invent. This is a cinematic game of *Knock Down Ginger*, only we won't run away from private spaces, we will barge in through the doors, we will let loose protagonists as antagonists on an unfolding everyday. We make up stories, tell lies, and offer the chance to act-up and act-out – to re-experience what has occurred, only differently, through the crystalline prism of film. We will try to make a second skin for us. This skin would be film(making). The film will be a series of dead-ends (which open as we ignore the walls), of non-events, interspersed with the veil of fiction, fiction like a faint that collapses into the actual, the inside out, where the borderlands and definitions of interior and exterior are disbanded. The film to come moves towards an event without knowing what that event will be. The film to come is what happens.

We are in a time when time itself mediates us and is re-mediated by us, where place seems absurd and identity sounds absurd. To be social is to be in a state of constant revision, of re-write. To have objectives, expectations, desires, is to frame a life not yet lived, and we characterize ourselves in order to make actual those stories of ourselves. Trying to hold ground is very difficult. *The Film to Come* is not about product or outcome but is, in itself, a temporary autonomous zone, a microform of upturning that turns the world upside down using film as the lever and pulley: the world and the real and the film are rendered as indistinct from one another. Excess, risk, and all of the sticky stuff and sticky situations, the ungainly body and the clumsy camera. Gramsci asked, what is the will outside of intellect? It is the force of action. When one decides to do something extraordinary, everything becomes charged. This often involves separating self from world. I have to make one more film, one more film, which begins as narrative, and becomes void.

I am innately genital, and if we examine closely what that means, it means that I have never made the most of myself... O bitches of impossibility!

(Artaud, letter to Jacques Riviere, 1970-4, vol.1:19)

I write for a species that does not yet exist.

(Nietzsche *The Will To Power* [1968])

## Screening feedback for *The Film*

### Jenny Mellings

Did not know the original brief but understood that the residency was short - about one month and that Steven was not familiar with the town or the people. He seemed to be working with members of the community who had come forward to be involved with the project. Did not know the nature of the group he was working with but presumed there were no selection criteria other than their willingness to participate.

The (roughly edited) film seemed in one way deeply honest in that the film initiator or principal maker (recognised by most as the one in control) stood to one side, and instead of making a more predictable and straightforward documentary about the community he more or less filmed all that he had to go on at that time, which appeared to be about the practical and other preparations for making a film in a new environment in which he might have felt a little awkward and out of place. As the main cameraman he did not make himself a completely invisible (yet always potent) presence, but tried to be open about exactly who was around the camera and contributing to the resulting film. This highlighted the nature of each individual's involvement, but did it make him less in control of the outcome? This was one of the questions which was addressed in the talk after the screening.

Attention was drawn to the alienation of Steven from the place when he first arrived and the artificiality of the situation, but as the film went on, this feeling began to wear off as the process of making film created the possibility of more genuine interaction between the strangers. Meanwhile, the uncomfortable sensation of settling in (albeit briefly) as a visitor is laid bare - as was observed by others on watching the film.

In starting the film with "no content", Steven makes no assumptions about the place or the people, but allows them to "be" on the film. The generosity of the other participants, who had not presumable known him for very long, was apparent. The main character seemed almost to have been waiting for Steven to arrive in the town so as to publicly air certain spiritual /religious/ philosophical conclusions about life in general. It seemed clear that the experience was genuinely meaningful to him. The film seemed to provoke deep thinking and contemplation which may not otherwise have come to a head or been expressed.

It was suggested that the emergent content of the film was a record perhaps of the first interaction between Steven's arrival in a strange town and the hand of friendship, which was extended to him primarily by those who became involved with the film. This seemed to be quite strongly conveyed and was quite (for want of a better word!) 'touching.'

Some difficult questions arose in the discussion. Was the resident artist in some way using them? Had other potential participants sensed that and veered away? (or if not, were they happy about their footage not being shown as part of the edited version?). Someone not involved with the project suggested that the whole film idea could be viewed as a hoax - a non-film and doubted that it would be/was intended to be shown to a wider audience, which was perhaps to betray the expectations of the people of Bridport who were involved in making what could have been a straightforward summary of the significance and uniqueness of their lives.

Technically, the film quality varied because some old film stock had been used from a local shop. This again made the viewer more conscious of the contribution of film quality to the final result, and we ended up seeing the environs of Bridport through the materials/media that it had to offer. It was also observed that Hollywood style production values had been used alongside hand-held camera qualities in the film.

The quite banal commentary reflected what the new friends/acquaintances had between them - the process of filming in the selected location, and the delicate balance of their individual contributions to this.

Shots were lingering, varied in quality, sometimes soft and blurry. The images that have remained in my memory are of a bearded man and a youth walking up a narrow tree-lined lane, the same bearded man hoeing the soil in a small plot of land, the three men standing on misty hilltops around Bridport and a small empty looking stone building with the brief appearance of a female participant.

There was a discussion about the influence of reality TV on the chosen style of/approach to the project.

The fact that Steven undertook the final act of control or authorship of the film by taking complete control of the editing of the material was discussed. It was decided that it would be difficult to involve more people in this. It has to be done in a restricted environment and was not a group activity. It was also for one brain alone, one final vision had to be assembled from the vast amount of footage. This was quite widely understood., but not by all present. Why should Steven get the last say in the final result, but logically speaking why not - it was his film, they eventually established.

The overwhelming presence however in the film that we saw, seemed to be the man with the beard, and it also seemed that Steven had gone out of his way to allow the result to be shaped by his essential character and contributions, and was also clearly open to the opinions and criticism of others in a way that not all film-makers would allow themselves to be. The final(?) result was quietly intense and will also appreciate with time.

- Jenny Mellings, July 2004

**Bridget Joslin**

Hello Steven,

Here are our rather sketchy memories of the screening.

Issues: (some overlapping)

1. Ownership - who owns the various stages of the process - the walking experience, the film shot as part of that experience, of which we saw some (although partly edited by then), and the final edited film?
2. Process/product - should there be a final product in terms of the residency brief and in terms of the wishes of the participants? Did an edit convey a betrayal of the process or the expected and proper reward for it.
3. Audience - in preparing/not preparing the final edited film, who should constitute the audience? Does this affect the form of the film and its content?
4. Aesthetics - Participants wanting a professional finish of which they could feel proud and you possibly wanting a low-tech finish/ your own 'late' aesthetic.
5. Lack of subject versus narrative development - once a strong character had been introduced, difficult to rein back to original aim??? The 'star' of the film seemed to be on a quest whereas you perhaps wanted a derive or figure in a landscape idea?? - the two might seem compatible during the process but become more difficult as the product takes shape. There is a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (depending on how you look at it) tension between the intention and effect i.e., some traditional elements e.g. strong characters/ beginning of a story/monologue and the flatness of a non-narrative non-event.
6. Real time Vs edited highlights- Real time disappears as soon as editing begins.

Nick finally ruminated that if the purpose of this film is to show nothing happening, is pointing the camera at nothing as persuasive as a film maker using his/her best skills to show nothing happening?

It was a very foggy night as we drove home. I hope this helps and makes sense.

Bridget Joslin  
July 2004





The film we would have made



August 21st 2006

Dear Roy, Arrun and Sharon (Carlos, Rozi, Doug and Jess)

I'm sitting in my studio in East London, alternating between working on my thesis and contemplating how on earth to get back to America given the current absurdity. I have enclosed x4 DVDs of *The Actually Trilogy*, which includes *The Film* and *The Film We Didn't Make*, a copy for each of you. This is close to a final version, but there a few extra changes I want to make which will destabilise the flow (something I think is necessary - at the moment I find it a little too straight forward and lacking the complexity of the shoot). I'm extremely pleased and proud of it as a film, and a cluster of films - I've had tremendous feedback on it and the trilogy. But there is an element missing, I've worked out what that is and I'd like to propose it to you for your contemplation and consideration...

There is ***the film we would have made***.

I would like you to think of the film we would have made. Over a couple of years, and a number of very valuable and fruitful, drifting days, we have come to know one another and produced two films. Filmmaking is something I brought into your lives, and walking as meditation in Dorset is something you brought into my life. That is quite something. In a way each of the two films we have made thus far contains within it (even if only as memory) a film we would have made, if we hadn't gone off on so many difficult and delightful tangents. I feel that your image of the film we would have made will complete this particular creative chapter. This does not require cameras (although it can), and need not be complicated (even though it might be).



If you are agreeable, I would like you to write down, photograph and/or draw:  
*images, shots and sequences, actions and words, transitions and dissolves, locations and scenarios, sound and score elements, dramatic activity, colours and camera movements...*

These would combine as thumbnails for a film we will never make. Do not be critical of any of your ideas, no matter how random or unformed they may seem. I would assemble your script pages, notes and pictures and compile them into a dossier that I'd publish as a small book or pamphlet. We would all have a copy of this book and it will also be exhibited alongside of the projected three films (*Of Camera, The Film, The Film We Didn't Make*) in a gallery context. I'm not sure where yet. In terms of timescale, there is no hurry, and I'm expecting to answer questions from you about specifics before you begin anything. This might be a couple of hours activity for you, scrawling on napkins and the backs of envelopes, or something you dip in and out of over a six month period, producing refined themes, storylines, and designs. It really is up to you. By all means involve Doug and Carlos too. I'm imagining ideas and notations will be posted around, forwarded, revised, amongst all of us: a script by correspondence.

I am asking you to do this for a number of reasons. For me, the project we embarked on in 2003-2004 has to do with encountering the lived world through the veil of conceiving a film, the veil of setting out to make a film. That film was always in front of us - our destination - and still is, even though we have produced a number of marvellous pieces en route. I ask you, what is a film? What film is it? How do you see it, hear it, think it in your minds? How do you find its form in the faces, landscapes, words and activities of your locality? Where and how is it more than, or other than, the world you live in? How do you recollect it (your imagined film) when you think back to our five days together last summer?

This project fits into my wider process as an artist, which is to explore the relationship between the moving image, thought and everyday life, and to allow films to drift away from my control and authorship. This is a film *you* will invent, independently of me. It is about your ideas and your thoughts. My involvement or non-involvement is down to you. I am passing on the film baton. I would like very much for you to jot down that film that is in your memory, in your imagination, in your perception, in your creative walkabout. Please do not overly concern yourself with its coherence. It is the film we would have made, not a film we will or could ever make.

What a film.

I look forward to hearing from you. Please ask questions.

My very best,

Steven

p.s. I think its fitting somehow that I'm always revising *The Film We Didn't Make*, so that it is never finished.

Exposure 1/125 sec f/11



## Interval (1) and (2)

### Interval (1)

Wednesday 25 October, Department of Media Study, Buffalo, NY  
Saturday 2 November 2010

### Interval (2)

9.30 Coffee and introduction, followed by Stephen Hall

10.30 - 1.00 Film festival film program: The Book of the Dead (1991)

1.00 - 1.30 Lunch (approx. 1.00 a plate, film)

1.30 - 2.00 Interval (2) film program: The Book of the Dead (1991)

2.00 - 2.30 Coffee and introduction, followed by Stephen Hall

Film can help us

# INTERVAL (1)

A confluence at SUNY at Buffalo North Campus  
Screening at Squeaky Wheel

Interval (1) is an event bringing together filmmakers, writers and theorists in response to Gilles Deleuze's film philosophy. What current and historical forms of documentary, narrative feature and artists' film/video operate laterally from within the interval film, papers, and films as papers offer new thoughts from the gap between screen and mind, film and world...

Designed by Al Burt



**Film Can Help Us Think Thought**

**INTERVAL (1)**

University at Buffalo, Department of Media Study, Buffalo, NY  
Saturday, 5 November 2005

**Conference Schedule**

9.30 Coffee and introductory address by Stefani Bardin

**10.00 - 12.15 THE PEOPLE ARE MISSING (The Ruin of Representation)**

**Hanna Rose Shell** Locomotion in Water (film)

**Nilima Rabl** InDifferent Media - minor self-interruptions, cries, and modulated catastrophes (film, paper)

**William Raban** Continental drifts (film)

**Deborah Stratman** In Order Not To Be Here (film)

**Steven Eastwood** The lived time of film-unmaking (film/paper)

**Moderated by Caroline Koebel**

Break for lunch

Lunch for Moderators and Panelists on the Second Floor of the CFA Atrium

**1.15 - 3.00 OF HISTORY: (The Mediation of Past as Future)**

**Natalie Frigo** First Wives and Nov 22nd 1963 (film)

**Sonja Milka Bertucci** La Jetee: aistesis of image, affect of memory (paper)

**Aaron Valdez** Dissolve (film)

**Jeff Netto** Marcel Duchamp's Anemic-Cinema (1926) (paper)

**Michelle Smith** The Girl Who Lost Her Head (fragment) (film)

**Moderated by Sarah Bay-Cheng**

Break for coffee

**3.30 - 6.00 THRESHOLDS OF NARRATIVE (Crystalline Stories)**

**Romeo Grunfelder** Rallye (film and interview)

**Catherine Wheatley** Haneke and Unpleasure - a criticism of Deleuzian cinematic modernism (paper)

**Abigail Child** Dark Dark (film)

**Norman Gendelman** A Shock to the Sensory Motor: 'Memento' and the Implosive Mode (paper)

**Daniel Cockburn** Mind the Gap: falling through the cracks in the present tense (film/paper)

**Paul Tarrago** Making Things Meaningful (film)

**Moderated by Alan Rhodes**

**6.45 - 7.00 SPECIAL SCREENING OF THE BERLIN FILES BY JANET CARDIFF & GEORGE BURES MILLER**



# Interval 1 (22)

[www.cinemaofthefuture.org/interval2](http://www.cinemaofthefuture.org/interval2)

New thoughts conducted via film and video.  
What next for the moving image?

Bringing together filmmakers and theorists for two days of screenings, debate and exchange based around Deleuze's film philosophy, and his terms: the time-image, the movement-image and the run of representation.

## Confluence

Janet Cardiff & George Burdick Miller  
David Rodowick (author, *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine*)  
Henry Viles Wives  
Duncan Rees  
Peter Scherkerovsky  
Nicola Hewitt  
Clio Barnett  
Stephen Connolly  
Kieran Milza & Brad Butler  
Mina Walsh  
Steven Eastwood  
Emily Richardson  
Alan Rhodes  
Philip Wornell  
Mark Aerial Walker  
Sophia Katsoglou  
Rob Grasse  
Michael Goddard  
Henry Korb Sassen  
Frodo Elavia  
Resonance FM

## Screening

Doug Fichtone  
Jamie O'Hall  
Chris Ernst  
Daniel Cockburn  
Kathryn McDermis  
Peter Miller  
Romeo Grunfelder  
Natalie Frigo  
Victoria Fu  
Paul Tarago  
Alexander Stewart  
Joanna Raczynska  
Ben Colway  
Stefan Bardin  
Jigoku

## Confluence

The Slade School of Art (UCL), Weburn Place  
9am - 6pm Friday March 17th

## Screening

Cine Lumiere, Institut Francars, South Kensington  
12pm - 6pm Saturday March 18th

SPONSORED BY: UCL GRADUATE FUND; THE SLADE SCHOOL OF FINE ART; DEPT. OF MEDIA STUDY, SUNY AT BUFFALO



**Interval(2) confluence WOBURN SQUARE. Friday March 17th, 9am - 7pm**

**Room # 3 Confluence Room**

**9.00am coffee. 9.45am Confluence introduction**

**10am Intervening in Reality: (Moderator: Gareth Evans)**

**Nicole Hewitt (The Slade)**

Foreign grammar - looking at the familiar in a different language

**Stephen Connolly**

The Whale (screening)

**Michael Goddard (Lodz)**

Irrational Intervals in Rolf de Heer's "The Tracker"

**Steven Eastwood (The Slade, DMS Buffalo)**

The Film We Didn't Make

**Henry VIII's Wives**

Mr. Hysteria - trailing phenomena

**12.15 LUNCH**

**1.00 pm Contemporary Images and the Gap Moderator: (Penny Florence)**

**David Rodowick (Harvard)**

Interval: The Two Cosmogonies of Contemporary Images

**Alan Rhodes (York University, Toronto)**

Video essay: Metonymy & the Irrational Interval in Multi-channel

**Sophia Kosmaoglou (Goldsmiths)**

Playing Dead

**Maria Walsh (University of the Arts London, Chelsea)**

The Irrational Interval and Film Installation

**3.00pm Coffee**

**3.30pm - 4.30 pm Keynote: Janet Cardiff & George Bures Miller (plus  
The Berlin Files)**

**4.30pm Between screen, world and mind: (Moderator: Ian White)**

**Rob Grose**

Irrational Thought and Political Aesthetics

**Firoza Elavia (York University, Canada)**

Drifting at Time's Edge: Claire Denis' L'Intrus

**Hilary Koob Sassen**

The Elaboration of Culture in Time is Towards Multiple Transnational

Infrastructure Economies

**Duncan Reekie (Exploding Cinema)**

Invisible Shrine Film/video essay

**6pm - 7pm Q & A: What next for the Moving Image?**

**Room # 1**

**Mr Hysteria (Henry VIII's Wives) x3 monitors**

**The Waltz and In Between (Nicole Hewitt) monitor and headphones**

**Room # 2**

**Selected work by Michelle Smith**

**The Space Between (Karen Mirza & Brad Butler)**

**Inferno Remix (Nicola Woodham)**

**Room #4**

**Road Race (Clio Barnard)**

**Shock (Phillip Warnell)**



**Room #5**

Café and Lunch area

**Resonance FM** (Mick Shaw)

**The Posers and Playing Dead** (Sophia Kosmaglou)

**Les Evanescents** (Cedric Noel)

**Francis Summers**

**Office**

**Relative Time Management** (Jamie O'Neil / Kurt Weibers)

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***Interval(2) Saturday screening***

**March 18th Cine Lumiere, Institut-Francais**

**Queensbury Place, London SW7 2DT**

**(nearest tube South Kensington)**

**12.00 - 1.45pm Cinema: screening #1**

**Holiday** (Chris Ernst)

**Outer Space** (Peter Tscherkassky)

**Metronome** (Daniel Cockburn)

**Relative Time Management** (Jamie O'Neil/Kurt Weibers)

**Resident of Earth** (Paul Tarrago)

**Suspicious Activity** (Katherin McInnis)

**Towards a Common Understanding** (Doug Fishbone)

**Down There** (Ben Callaway)

**10th Lesson** (Joanna Raczynska)

**Block** (Emily Richardson)

**Petite Salle Seminar Room:**

**2.00 - 4.00pm**

**Lunch and plenary discussion**

**Mark Aerial Waller - La Societe des Amis de Jude X1**

**4.00 - 5.45pm Cinema: screening #2**

**Projector Obscura** (Peter Miller)

**Like a House on Fire** (Steven Eastwood)

**Instructions for a Light and Sound Machine** (Peter Tscherkassky)

**Desi're** (Romeo Grunfelder)

**Dinner with the Stranger** (Natalie Frigo)

**Paraculture / Future Garden State** (Hilary Koob-Sassen)

**Birthday** (Victoria Fu)

**Atlas** (Chris Ernst)

**Here** (Fred Worden)

**Errata, A Compendium of Errors** (Alexander Stewart)

**The Berlin Files** (Janet Cardiff & George Bures Miller)

**Programme subject to change. To book tickets, call 0207 073 1350**

**Interval (2) would like to thank the event sponsors:**

UCL Graduate Fund, The Slade School of Fine Art, Penny Florence and  
The Slade Research Centre, The Dept. of Media Study, SUNY at Buffalo  
Julien Plante and the Cine Lumiere, Institut-Francais, Aldgate Press,  
and all of the volunteers working on the event.

**[www.cinemaintothereal.org/interval2](http://www.cinemaintothereal.org/interval2)**



S P H E R I C A L   O B J E C T I V E

AROUND AND ABOUT AN APPENDIX TO [WWW.STEVEN-BALL.NET](http://WWW.STEVEN-BALL.NET)

SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 2006

Deleuzian Delusion and the Enigmatic Cinematic

About 15 years ago I became very interested in Gilles Deleuze and bought a copy of *A Thousand Plateaus*. I still have it. There it is as it is today, battered from wear after all these years. Deleuze and Guattari were all the rage back then, name checked and quoted aplenty throughout the post modern artcrit and artists' crowds alike. At the time, as a relatively recent arriviste in Australia, steeped in ideas about nomadism, migration and mobility, I found *A Thousand Plateaus* full of analogous concepts, the rhizome as a metaphor for thought and idea formation, deterritorialization as an almost direct description of the migrant experience, becoming a body without organs in the context of questions of identity and individuality, all chimed with the post-colonial complexity of my Australian situation. My super 8 film *Periscope 180°* was the one that most directly picked up on these ideas, primarily through the voice over which in part lifts snatches of phrases from *A Thousand Plateaus*; in fact it quotes from many sources but reworks the references into its own semi-poetic essayistic flow of tenuous unresolved concepts, open and connectable, inconclusive yet evocative and with the suggestion of a profundity, however unfounded.

Just over 11 years since he threw himself out of a window to his death, there seems to be been a definite resurgence of interest in Deleuze's theories, in particular with regard to cinema and artists' moving image here in London. A series of seminars at the Photographers' Gallery, organised by Catherine Yass, is premised on Deleuze's theories about the relationship of sound to image, particularly how this might be used to elucidate contemporary artists' work in the moving image.

And for the past two days I have been attending *Interval 2*, a conference and screening event organised by Steven Eastwood, taking Deleuze's ideas about how the cinematic must have a 'shock effect' on thought and the idea of the irrational interval, a cut between two moving images not motivated by movement or action which allows the brain to pass into the not yet thought. The presenters at the conference were an impressive and quite diverse range of professional international luminaries like David Rodowick and Janet Cardiff, alongside PhD students and artists. I haven't had time to process the implications of all that I've seen and heard but a few particular impressions have formed.



My first impression is that those speakers whose presentations were only tangentially related, or completely unrelated to Deleuze's theories, were actually the most interesting and developed. Rodowick's presentation in particular dealt with his ideas about the different 'cosmogenies' of the digital and the analogue in the moving image and the implications of the transitional period we find ourselves in right now (this was a chapter from his next book so to save time and blogspace you can look forward to checking it out there!). Janet Cardiff and her partner Georges Bures Miller's assured presentation of their work, which relies heavily on the relationship of sound to image and geographic situation was, particularly in The Berlin Files, full of irrational intervals, and made no reference whatsoever to Deleuze.

It seems though that Deleuze's theories are indeed so open that they can be applied to more or less any work. This is due to an emphasis on non-conclusion, an interest in mid-points rather than end-points, his own writing as experimental philosophy evinced a great interest in the creative act, creativity as thinking in action, and makes him all but impossible to pin down: in short producing a very useful and adaptable philosophy.

More related to Deleuze, albeit indirectly via Bergson, who was profoundly influential on Deleuze, was Firoza Elavia's presentation on Claire Denis's film L'Intrus. Elavia used Bergson's idea of the passage of intuition into intellect (or is it the other way around – no matter I suppose) to identify the processes at work in L'Intrus, that somehow this idea that intuition results in an irrational interval that is equally intellectual was all very well but made for a very dull 'explication' of the processes at work in what is a remarkable film actually influenced more by the post-Lacanian subjective metaphysical psychoanalysis of Jean-Luc Nancy (the film being adapted from one of Nancy's essays). But of course the point is that there can be a Deleuzian 'reading' of pretty much anything. When asked if her readings had actually allowed her to reach an interpretation of the Denis film Elavia had to admit not. But was quick to point out that that was not the point, because Deleuze encourages open readings.

So many years after their publication in the early 80s, Deleuze's books Cinema 1: The Movement Image and Cinema 2: The Time Image are being used as texts to investigate cinema and artists' moving images. Perhaps in a time when film (specifically 35mm and 16mm) is becoming used by artists' reinvention of the cinematic wheel in a gallery context, this might be appropriate. Deleuze's idea of the irrational interval was prompted by an examination of Godard, and his writings rarely stray far from a cinema which, like Godard, while partially disrupting the codes of cinematic dramatic narrative, relies on the

understanding of cinematic semiotic codes as a pre-condition in order to conceive of anything like an irrational (irrational in respect to the self-perpetuated rationality of an 'illusionistic' cinematic language) interval as disruptive and worthy of investigation. So the veneer of radicalism relies on a deep conservatism, it is a theory that is 'normative', as wide ranging and imaginative as it might be, it has to rely on a ground zero of cinematic expression. This is why Deleuze was not equipped to deal with structural film and other practices that eschew the normalisation of cinematic language: partly because they were outside of his purview, and partly because in some ways they had already done the job of philosophy for him.

The kind of film that best suits Deleuzian cinematics is the enigmatic, which can use that irrational interval in an indefinable and hence poetic way. This cinema is very attractive and interesting precisely because it is either located in the realm of cinematic codes, or borrows those codes to enhance its sense of an internal, perhaps intuitive, and irrational logic which speaks to a subjective poeticism.

What interests me about the Deleuzian irrational interval is how it speaks to contemporary conditions in rather complex and problematic ways. On one hand it is a deeply western notion: while appearing radical and intellectually challenging, it is deeply imbedded within the canon of western, particularly French, philosophical development. Its re-emergence as theoretical currency comes in a recent history of the retreat of post modern moral relativism and a rise of the clash of civilisations and the new religiosity. The failure of relativism was in its inability to take account of a lack of relativism in other cultural formulations. The Deleuzian seems to suggest that it's all good with a kind of liberal openness and inconclusiveness, but it shies away from idealism and determinacy, this unfortunately seems to be at odds with the contemporary social and political reality. It seems to date from a (pre-neocon, pre-Taliban) time when the (western) world thought it had finally become secular. So perhaps Deleuzian theory, in its anachronism, ironically offers a kind of intellectual certainty, a reminder of a cinematic golden age when post-enlightenment politics were straightforward and secular.

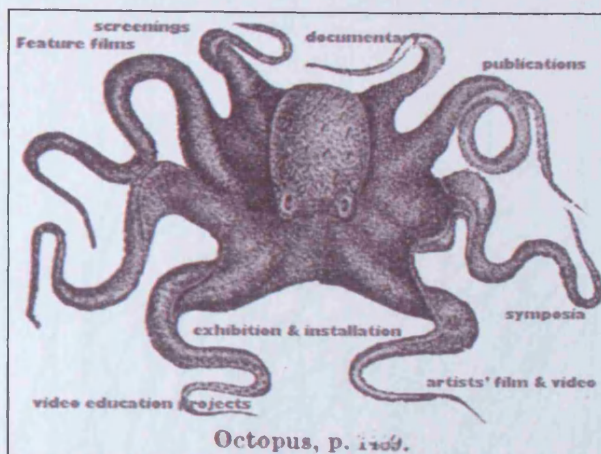
The idea of cinematic coherence, the Hollywood dream, the unproblematic linear narrative, is an escapist myth, which is precisely why it is so attractive and continues to play a role in lowest common denominator mainstream cinema and television. But this is becoming more rare at all levels of both mediated and everyday contemporary experience (is all everyday experience mediated now? I think mine might be), which is already located in the irrational interval. There is a continuous discontinuity in the urban experience as signs, symbols, sounds, referents, signifiers jumble through the landscape,

on the television, on the internet, on the radio, in magazines, on the buses, on your Playstations, Gameboys, mobile phones and iPods, everywhere life is more than simple irrational intervals, it is multiple coexisting and competing moving images. Deleuze may prove a vital, important and illuminating historical theoretical touchstone. But the world has moved on.

POSTED BY STEVEN BALL AT 11:39 PM



Octopus, a cell-based international group of moving image artists



## Octopus

A many-tentacled auteur-killing monster from the deep.

Octopus is a unique creative hub. It is a fired-up collection of actual bodies, people sharing skills, space, equipment and concepts, working on each other's ideas and pooling resources. Octopus is a movement of our own design; a structure for greater output; a third way, between the cinema, television and the gallery. Rather than modifying what we produce to fit an existing structure, this is the formation of a new culture. Octopus is a union, an employer, a site for increased creativity.

You, the person reading this, are a maker of moving images. You know that you have to put in an Olympian effort to get your projects off the ground. You know that your ideas are exceptional, that you have acquired numerous skills and connections over the years, and that you feel passionate about straddling discourses and disciplines. You defiantly do not isolate yourself as filmmaker or artist, as an industry player or as an academic, and you have had success in many or all of these areas. You are bored with pushing your own name forward in the fame game, and with working alone.

- You are a maker who is working, or desires to work, across disciplines, producing art, fiction, documentary, essay film, asking critical questions about the culture of the moving image.
- You are at the point where it is time to take a risk and invest in a more ambitious phase, something larger and more effective.
- You bring to this a sense of daring, your concepts, and your skills.

Octopus is a space for collaboration and the development of large projects such as feature films, documentaries and installations. This creature has tentacles reaching into and curling around a diverse range of discourses, practices and industries. We write grants, script edit, assist in production and post-production. We originate revenue-generating projects and pass freelance work on to each other. But it is more than this. Octopus is a context, an environment. It is the film and art industry in a microcosm, its own culture, pitching unique projects to cinema funds and distributors, Television, galleries and curators... IT IS AMBITIOUS - a manifesto based cellular structure, a dynamic system; one that produces difference and proliferates in multiple directions; a production company that formalizes a cottage industry.

Are you Octopus?

Copy of the letter, dated 1944, from the author to the editor of the Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine.

Dear Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th inst. and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the appropriate authorities for their consideration.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Yours faithfully,  
[Signature]



## Caught up in loops, an encounter in thought without a thinker

. 1997

### caught up in loops

(Transcribed from a dictaphone recording made several days after the event)

"I had time turned around for me, where it didn't run along the metronome which we are accustomed to where things move the way they move forward in a progression. Time was absolutely stretched and condensed and I couldn't stop it. I lay there, in the mud, close to Philip's camper van and I was trapped in an eternity of perceptual loops of sound and image, logical loops that were so pure and so advanced and so simple, they were perfect thoughts, perfect logical progressions which spiralled inwards in detail and perfection on such a scale that I felt I had to not think them because they ought not to be thought. Once you think on this scale with absolute abstract clarity you've crossed the line you should never cross, and I fought tooth and nail to not think these thoughts, because I knew that I was going to think my way too deep. I knew - I could feel, I could feel - my mind was becoming fundamentally aware of itself. And I knew I had to not do it.

Time became uncanny. I would lie down in the grass and look out under my arm, which was raised, and see somebody walking across the muddy field along the plastic path, and they were stretched. They were like a goblin but stretched, and walking so fast, three times normal speed. I put my head down in the earth. I thought, "I mustn't see that. I can't see these things". I sort of looked the other way and I saw the merry go round was turning on the opposite side of the valley. It just kept turning and turning, the same way, and I remember thinking, "It has been light for so long. This has been the longest day in the history of the Earth." The last time I knew the time it was about seven pm, and that had been a day or two ago. And there I was, lying on the earth, coming in and out of it, sickeningly. I felt so frightened. It's two or three days later now and I am out of it. I can still feel it sometimes, behind my eyes. I can still feel it. I have a headache. I can still feel it.

"A book is made of words in lines, and those words have a system that we understand as meaning, and we don't really pay any attention to the gaps [between the words]. But if there were no gaps then we would have no words. There have to be gaps in order to define the words. It's like the way film moves through a projector gate. You have to have a black between each frame, otherwise the frames blur into each other and you have no image. I think that the way we process experience works in the same way, and we aren't supposed to be aware of the gaps. The brain does the same thing. It orders in a certain way and we are accustomed to that order. We are accustomed to that calibration in our minds, even though our minds have to skip the blanks. Our minds are told not to tell ourselves about the blanks. I think that hallucinogens make us privy to that process of choice and selection, so that reality is seen as all of the gaps. It is the other side. That isn't quite as outlandish as it sounds. When I mention an alternate reality I mean just that. And I can still feel it. I can't see it, I can't think it, I can't know it, but I'm aware that it is there. It is a sensation. I think that if you know both completely, you aren't human any more. You aren't a self; you aren't a designated, defined singularity negotiating life, you are properly immersed. I think that's what happens in a psychosis or when you trip out and you can't come back - your ability to process is broken down so that there is no selection. It is difficult to define all of this because I have to use a rationale - reasoning - and I think that reasoning is one side of the coin and the other side of the coin is pure abstraction. And we have glimpses of that but we keep it in its proper place. Otherwise we couldn't properly move through time and space and personality, because it would all have combined

into a seamless ever-present chaos. The chaos I experienced was nightmarish, but it was pure, and abstract. I had very little consciousness left but I consciously fought to not think about it too much, although it was tempting, it was euphoric, if I had the strength. I fought not to think about it because I knew if I thought about it I would not come back.

So, I'm lying on my belly, my face is pressed in the mud, I look up and see the guy ropes of the condemned tent. I can see the huge stake driven into the earth that is holding up the condemned tent. It is like a monolith above my head. I can see the discarded beer bottles at the bottom of the stake. I can see Philip's camper van. But I'm not in it. I'm not there. Wherever I look the order of the field is breaking up into symmetries and asymmetries repeating themselves and breaking up, around me and around me, and I can't hold it down, I can't stop it from expanding or repeating, the same with sound, with image and sound. I can hear somebody singing the line of a song, coming across the day from a tent, and the line is repeated - three or four words - and time is different. I think; I think, I must move through time ordinarily as a series of incidents in a line, a very clear narrative that moves ahead, evolves, and there's no replaying of any of it, it just moves ahead. And yet there I am, lying face down, and all of the incidents in a line have been fucked-up, so that some of those incidents have lodged and are played again to me, played again to me, and the others were never even experienced, I never saw them, there were whole things I must have moved through that I didn't see or hear. I hear a line in a song played to me again, played to me again, and I'm pressing my hands in the mud and saying to myself "Hands on mud", but my fingers are white and green, putrid, and they're far away. I'm thinking, "Keep a hold of your hands. Hands in mud," and I look behind me. Philip is lying back in his camper van. He's scratching his belly. He's tired, but he's doing it indefinitely. It is taking a day. I've been here for days. How can this day have gone on for so long? How can that Ferris wheel just keep turning and turning? I close my eyes but I don't want to close my eyes because I need a reference to keep here. And yet I don't want to open my eyes because when I open my eyes I realise I'm not here. So I keep closing and opening my eyes. I look under my arm, which is pressed against the grass. I lift my elbow slightly so I have a view. I see a woman walking across the mud path to another tent and she is so many colours - she's stretched and she's walking so fast her legs are like an animation, a puppet. And she's moving so fast I think, "This is wrong." I'm muttering to myself, "I really want to come down now, really want to come down now," because I don't like it anymore. There's enough of me to feel that I want this to stop. It's like, I made a bad decision and I think, "You fool, you've tripped, you're gone, this is it forever, you're caught in these logic loops, these horrific pure logical loops where time is again and again but doesn't move forward the way you want it to." And I keep thinking, "I want to move forward. I want to come down." I keep searching for a ground, for something to root me. I concentrate on my breathing. I breathe in and I breathe out. If I can just keep calm and not be afraid I can ride this. But there's no me anymore. And it moves in surges. I place my head in the mud and I look up and everything is clear and I think, "I'm sober. I'm out." and then I lurch again and I think, "I'm gone, this is the worst" and then I lurch again and it's more horrific and there's nothing to hold me in at all.

Then things got a whole lot worse. It is so difficult to find pictures to persuade you of where I was, to use metaphors, like: a mirror. A metaphor or simile would be that there was a mirror pushed between my eyes so that everything I saw on the left was mirrored on the right. Philip's camper van was on both sides of me. The field was perfectly symmetrical. I tried to burp and my burp was symmetrical, played to me again and again, like I was stuck in a rut. And I splashed my face, I rubbed my face, I splashed my face and I rubbed my face and my hands were exactly the same on both sides, like I was split.

This was still before I was properly tripping out.



It was very pure.

I remember thinking, "They're all out there. They're all operating just fine. They're all moving around me and I'm not in it." I felt this pressure in my bladder and I managed to stumble to the toilet blocks. The ground was shifting and my legs were elastic and the time it took me to get to the trailer for the toilets was extended, the whole field was a stretched form that I was ploughing my way through and it was taking forever to get there, although outwardly I must have just walked to the toilets. But to me - to me, time and the way I moved through it was completely spastic, totally spastic. Time works as a system, if you're in it. It's there for us, but it is a construct, it's something we assimilate, we move through it conveniently, and I was moving through it, discordantly. Everything was improper. My legs made it up the steps and there I am standing in a toilet cubicle and I'm laughing to myself thinking, this is it, you've done it, you've put yourself outside of your own brain. And I splashed my face with water and I felt more clear. I actually thought, "This is going to be all right, I'm going to come down soon". I stepped out and space was liquid and space was horrid. Place was invalid. I realised I was afraid. I thought, [my voice sinks, sad] "I'm not going to come down". I fell back towards the camper van. None of this is coming out clearly because it is so difficult to recount - but I remember coming back to the camper van and Philip was standing there and he said, "Oh hello" and I said, "I'm having a bad trip!", vehemently, as I fell on my face. And he tried to photograph me. And I was clear for a second then. And then I was crawling around in the earth on all fours like a crab, not wanting to look at anyone at all, not wanting to look up. And then I was putting my head down in the grass. I wanted to eat the grass. I wanted to stuff myself with grounding."

## **A Seminar in Film Sound**

(Dir. Steven Eastwood. 16mm. 10 min, looped [currently mute]. UK/USA 2007)

Performer: Kana S

A film production student presents a seminar on the relationship between dialogue, musical score and environmental sound/added sound effects in the fiction film. During her presentation there are long periods of silence where she pauses for thought, and these gaps produce attenuations of sound in the class and in the ear of the viewer. The film camera tracks around the speaker in ten timed revolutions, each pass behind the college chalkboard introducing new micro changes of behaviour in the room.

## **Hearsay**

(Dir. Steven Eastwood. Mini DV.dur. 9 min. UK/CAN 2006)

Performers: Brenda Goldstein, Daniel Cockburn.

Waking from a disturbed sleep, caricatures of the curator and the neurotic artist-filmmaker ponder the current and historical predicament of the moving image: where it belongs, who it is for, when it articulates best. The editing, framing and sound design seem to respond to their tug-o-war of words, and the characters themselves are prone to the playback of another's words, clutching at their video cameras and headphones in the hope of finding the greater point. *Hearsay* is misheard and rewritten from an emailed conversation between Benjamin Cook and Steven Eastwood. The tape was made for the TANK TV compilation in the UK. It is an interview as intervention. Although the performers frequently point, it never makes that much of a point itself. You will have heard the conversation before...

## **The Film We Didn't Make**

(Dir. Steven Eastwood. 16mm/Mini DV. 16.30 min + 10 min commentary. 2006)

A woman is delivered by car to a remote coastal location, a stranded fictional character equipped with suitable props. Not only is she reluctant to be in this place, she is also reluctant to be a character in a film. Is she the same woman from *Of Camera*, the performer Sharon Smith who played that character, or someone else? On a beach she encounters two players from the actual, Roy White and Arrun Denman from *The Film*. The woman complains when they try to speak to her but remains bound to them through a number of environments and dramatic false starts. The three characters from previous films mix like oil and water, marionettes in a school play on a hiding to nowhere, making their way to the actual through lumpy gravy. The voice of the filmmaker intervenes throughout, trying to make sense of his film as a fictional muscle that might be massaged until it becomes a fact. Events finally settle on a hillside at sunset in what appears to be the place of a natural exchange. But inside the film is another film - *The Film We Didn't Make* - that became the film we did make. Which parts of this film are life and which parts are not? What is a film if it is not a life?

Made by Steven Eastwood, Arrun Denman, Sharon Smith, Roy White, Carlos Guarita, Rosalind Peters, Doug Palmer, Jess Wiley; score by Jim Kirby & Conor Kelly.

## **Like a House on Fire**

(Dir. Steven Eastwood. 16mm / Minidv. 16.45 min. 2006)

At the centre of this film labyrinth is a tarot reading in which the invented cards seem to determine or reflect unfolding events on screen. There is a filmmaker trying to write a film, but the house in which he writes is cohabited by the film's crew, cast and the characters they are playing.

Everyone is banging around on and off camera, trying to get into the bathroom, or waiting for the film and its story to happen. This is not a story however, but rather a sequential turning of nonsensical cards: the tampon in the toilet bowl, a light repositioned causing shadow, a man on the floor who cannot separate himself from the house (which may or may not be on fire). This film is *Like a House on Fire*, a cinematic game of *Cluedo* in which the lead piping murdered the ballroom using a Colonel Mustard. Every detail is meaningless sign, in shuffle. A film can go anywhere it wants...

Featuring: Chris Barr, Megan Piret, Jeffrey White. Dir. Of Photography: Vincenzo Mistretta. Feature track: *Tower of Love* by Jim Noir

## **Come as you Are**

(Dir. Steven Eastwood. Mini DV. 11 min. Croatia/UK. 2005)

The filmmaker wandered Momjan, a quiet Croatian hill town, transcribing as much as possible of what he could see and hear into a film script. This semi-psychotic act of film writing generated an extensive and diverse list of characters, including: a teenage girl in jeans sat on a white wooden chair, a boy on a bmx, an elderly woman sat on a porch with her hands over her face, workman number 4 who stands motionless holding onto a rope, and a female cook, blond with bright ginger highlights and a banshee laugh. An open casting session was held for an afternoon in and around the town hall. Local residents and visitors to Momjan turned up to audition for the part of themselves or someone else. In this film, which is a potential film and always and everywhere, people are variously good and bad at playing themselves. Casting is an opportunity to be other and to think of a town as a film. This is the barest beginnings of an impossible inventory, an always and everywhere Momjan as cinema.

## **The Film**

(Dir. Steven Eastwood. 16mm/Minidv. 28 min. 2004)

The result of a month-long residency at PVA Artists' Media Resource in Bridport, Dorset, 'The Film' is a neither a documentary nor a fiction, but rather an open-ended free-associative collaboration between filmmaker and members of the Bridport community. Arriving as a stranger I met with strangers, and asked them to enter into a *new real life* – the making of this film, 'The Film' – with me. Together we devised and improvised a film as a becoming of thought and duration and a way of passing time together. 'The Film' is not narrative, character or content driven. The process was closer to what might be termed automatic, structured around happenstance and made by way of a collective cinematic wandering. "Last of the Summer Wine meets Chris Marker."

## **Of Camera**

(Dir. Steven Eastwood. dur. 14.40 min. Original format S16mm. 2003)

'Of Camera' explores the abortive attempts of two people to be together in the same space. Their disagreement is fuelled by technical difference: the woman exists on videotape and the man on celluloid. The story corrupts as the two realise they are incompatible and that they are being filmed and watched.

## **Different Systems of Chaos**

(Dir: Steven Eastwood and Anya Lewin. 27.40 min. DV. 2003)

A film about the artist versus the administrator and the director of a post soviet Eastern European art school who refuses to repeat anything, even for BBC. This is a playful examination of a Lithuanian school for 12-18 year olds and the role of bureaucracy in education and art.

## ***I Make Things Happen***

(Dir: Steven Eastwood. performer: Jo Cripps. 6 min. Mini DV/Beta. 2001)  
In the belief that through sheer force of will she can change what goes on around her, a young woman wanders South London. Her efforts range from the tedious to the hilarious and the uncomfortable. Gradually, her will leads her to try and change the very film she is in...

## ***The End***

(Dir: Steven Eastwood. performer: Ava Hervier. 9 min. Mini DV. 2002)  
A young French woman treads Soho, London asking passers-by directions to, "The End". She is met with a range of responses, from the good-natured and helpful to the bemused and philosophical. Nobody suspects however that she is asking directions to the end of the film.

## ***Chris Crossing***

(Dir. Steven Eastwood. dur.4 min. Mini dv. 2003)  
Performers: Tom Haines, Chris Branch.  
Tom and Chris find themselves down a back alley and stop by the side of the broken white line down the centre of the street. Chris begins to explain to Tom the crossing-the-line rule in cinematography. He isn't very good at explaining it however, and as he and Tom speak their respective over-the-shoulder and point-of-view shots get tangled up, until both the line and Tom get cross. Chris never gets cross.

## ***Auditorium***

(Dir. Steven Eastwood. 7 min. Hi8mm completed to Mini-dv. 1999/2002)  
'Auditorium' is a single angle, single take video which presents in real time the total eclipse of the sun in the summer of '99. The title is suggestive of how a phenomenon is mediated through language; of how the eclipse was experienced as *event*. Increasingly cinema is a facet of language, with moving image/narrative film used as a way of describing the real. As a bystander commented just before totality, "It's like the lights going down in a cinema". Screened as a part of the GATE film programme on the open land of Dartmoor, October 2002.

## ***Cinema into the Real, Test 3* (FIX 02, Belfast. 2002) and *Test 4* (Adhoc Urban Festival, Zagreb. 2003)**

For a number of hours a bus and tram stop became elaborate film sets, co-opting members of the public into a place of film fiction. This film is the real world - its fictional coherence and dramatic impact consisted entirely of the unforeseeable events that transpired in reaction to the context. In pulling cinema into a real and ostensibly unmediated context, the project attempts to create a situation in which the real is recognised as being an elaborate and covert theatre of multiple and continually revised fictions.

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## **Filmography**

*Workers leaving the Lumière Factory* (Lumière Brothers 1895)  
*The Life of the American Fireman* (Edwin S. Porter 1903)  
*Vita Futuriatica* (Arnaldo Ginna 1916)  
*Nanook of the North* (Robert Flaherty 1922)  
*Sherlock Jnr* (Buster Keaton 1924)  
*Kino Pravda* (*Cinema Truth*, Vertov Dziga 1922-25)  
*Battleship Potemkin* (Sergei Eisenstein 1925)  
*The Seashell and the Clergyman* (Germaine Dulac 1928)  
*Un Chien Andalou* (Luis Buñuel & Salvador Dalí 1929)  
*L'Age D'Or* (Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dalí 1930)  
*The Triumph of the Will* (Leni Riefenstahl 1935)  
*Night Mail* (John Grierson 1936)  
*Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles 1941)  
*Ritual in Transfigured Time* (Maya Deren 1945-6)  
*The Big Sleep* (Howard Hawks 1946)  
*The Lady in the Lake* (Robert Montgomery 1946)  
*Stromboli* (Roberto Rossellini 1949)  
*Film Poems* (Margaret Tait 1952-64)  
*A Portrait of Ga* (Tait 1952)  
*Tokyo Story* (Yasujiro Ozu 1953)  
*Les Maitres-Fous* (Jean Rouch 1953-54)  
*Jaguar* (Jean Rouch 1954)  
*The Searchers* (John Ford 1956)  
*A Man Escaped* (Robert Bresson 1956)  
*Vertigo* (Alfred Hitchcock 1958)  
*Hiroshima Mon Amour* (Alain Resnais 1959)  
*Last Year at Marienbad* (Alain Resnais 1961)  
*The Trial* (Orson Welles 1962)  
*La jetée* (Chris Marker 1962)  
*L'Eclisse* (Michaelangelo Antonioni 1962)  
*Mothlight* (Stan Brakhage 1963)  
*Where I Am is Here* (Margaret Tait 1964)  
*The Passion According to St. Matthew* (Pier Paolo Pasolini 1964)  
*Il Deserto Rosso* (Michaelangelo Antonioni 1964)  
*Pierrot le Fou* (Jean-Luc Godard 1965)

*Kitchen* (Andy Warhol 1965)  
*The Battle of Algiers* (Gillo Pontecorvo 1965)  
*Blow-Up* (Michaelangelo Antonioni 1966)  
*The Good, the Bad and The Ugly* (Sergio Leone 1966)  
*Two or Three Things I Know About Her* (Jean-Luc Godard 1966)  
*The Flicker* (Tony Conrad 1966)  
*Cathy Come Home* (Ken Loach 1966)  
*The Jungle Book* (Wolfgang Reitherman 1967)  
*Titicut Follies* (Frederick Wiseman 1967)  
*Playtime* (Jacques Tati 1967)  
*High School* (Frederick Wiseman 1968)  
*Theorem* (Pier Paolo Pasolini 1968)  
*Rosemary's Baby* (Roman Polanski 1968)  
*The Big Flame* (Ken Loach 1969)  
*Midnight Cowboy* (Jon Schlesinger 1969)  
*The Longest Most Meaningless Movie in the World* (Vincent Patouillard 1970)  
*Numéro Zéro* (Jean Eustache 1971)  
*Land of Silence and Darkness* (Werner Herzog 1971)  
*Fata Morgana* (Werner Herzog 1971)  
*The Act of Seeing One's Own Eyes* (Stan Brakhage 1971)  
*Don't Look Now* (Nicolas Roeg 1973)  
*The Legend of Boggy Creek* (Charles B. Pierce 1972)  
*Aguirre, The Wrath of God* (Werner Herzog 1973)  
*Mirror* (Andrei Tarkovsky 1974)  
*India Song* (Marguerite Duras 1975)  
*The Passenger* (Michaelangelo Antonioni 1975)  
*Kings of the Road* (Wim Wenders 1976)  
*Ai No Corrida (In the Realm of the Senses)* (Nagisa Oshima 1976)  
*Le fond de l'air est rouge* (Chris Marker 1977)  
*Nighthawks* (Ron Peck 1978)  
*Stalker* (Andrei Tarkovsky 1979)  
*Apocalypse Now* (Francis Ford Coppola 1979)  
*Woyzeck* (Werner Herzog 1979)  
*Camera Buff* (Krzysztof Kieslowski 1979)  
*Scénario du film Passion* (Jean-Luc Godard 1982)  
*Fitzcarraldo* (Werner Herzog 1982)

*Sans Soleil* (Chris Marker 1983)  
*Downside Up* (Tony Hill 1985)  
*I'm Not The Girl Who Misses Much* (Pippilotti Rist 1986)  
*Sherman's March* (Ross McElwee 1986)  
*Where is the Friend's House?* (Abbas Kiarostami 1986)  
*Incidence of Catastrophe* (Gary Hill 1987-88)  
*The Thin Blue Line* (Errol Morris 1988)  
*Speaking Parts* (Atom Egoyan 1989)  
*Homework* (Abbas Kiarostami 1989)  
*Close-Up* (Abbas Kiarostami 1990)  
*Misery* (Rob Reiner 1990)  
*Double Blind* (Sophie Calle and Greg Shepherd 1992)  
*Life and Nothing More, a.k.a And Life Goes On* (Abbas Kiarostami 1992)  
*Holding the Viewer* (Tony Hill 1993)  
*Through the Olive Trees* (Abbas Kiarostami 1994)  
*Gallivant* (Andrew Kötting 1996)  
*Unmade Beds* (Nicholas Barker 1997)  
*Deconstructing Harry* (Woody Allen 1997)  
*Taste of Cherry* (Abbas Kiarostami 1997)  
*Drinking For England* (Brian Hill 1998)  
*Outer Space* (Peter Tscherkassky 1999)  
*Daddy's Girl* (Edmund Coulthard 1999)  
*Who's Been Framed* (Riete Oord 1999)  
*American Movie* (Chris Smith 1999)  
*The Gleaners and I* (Agnès Varda 2000)  
*Here to Where* (Paul Berczeller/Glen Luchford 2000)  
*Fuckland* (José Luis Márques 2000)  
*Bowling for Columbine* (Michael Moore 2002)  
*The Hours* (Stephen Daldry 2002)  
*The Berlin Files* (Janet Cardiff/George Bures Miller 2003)  
*Tarnation* (Jonathon Caouette 2003)  
*The Blonds* (Albertina Carri 2003)  
*At Five in the Afternoon* (Samira Makhmalbaf 2003)  
*Like All Bad Men He Looks Attractive They Say* (Michele Smith 2003)  
*Fahrenheit 911* (Michael Moore 2004)  
*Ten on Ten* (Abbas Kiarostami 2004)  
*The Ladykillers* (Joel Coen and Ethan Coen 2004)

*Thirteen Lakes* (James Benning 2004)  
*King Kong* (Peter Jackson 2005)  
*Projector Obscura* (Miller 2005)  
*Grizzly Man* (Werner Herzog 2005)  
*Instructions for a Light and Sound Machine* (Peter Tscherkassky 2005)  
*Zidane* (Douglas Gordon 2006)  
*Dinner with the Stranger* (Natalie Frigo 2006)  
*Sheitan* (Kim Chapiron 2006)

**Video, Film, Sound installation**

*Tall Ships* (Gary Hill 1992)  
*24 Hour Psycho* (Douglas Gordon 1993)  
*The Foley Artist* (Tacita Dean 1996)  
*The Missing Voice (Case Study B)* (Janet Cardiff 1999)  
*In Real Time* (Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller 1999)  
*The Paradise Institute* (Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller 2001)